EXPLOSIVE CONSOLE, COMPUTER AND COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT RAZE Nº3

RAZE

JANUARY 1991
A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
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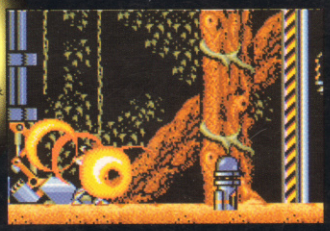

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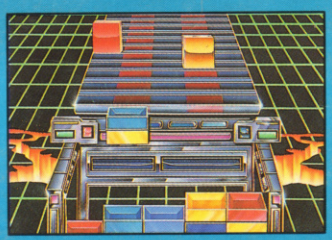

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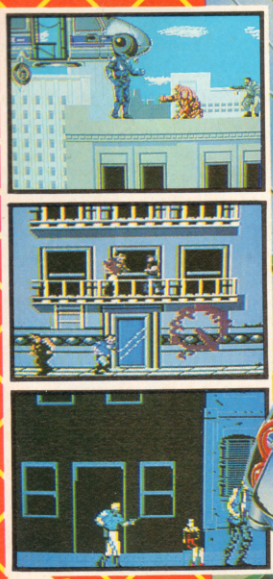

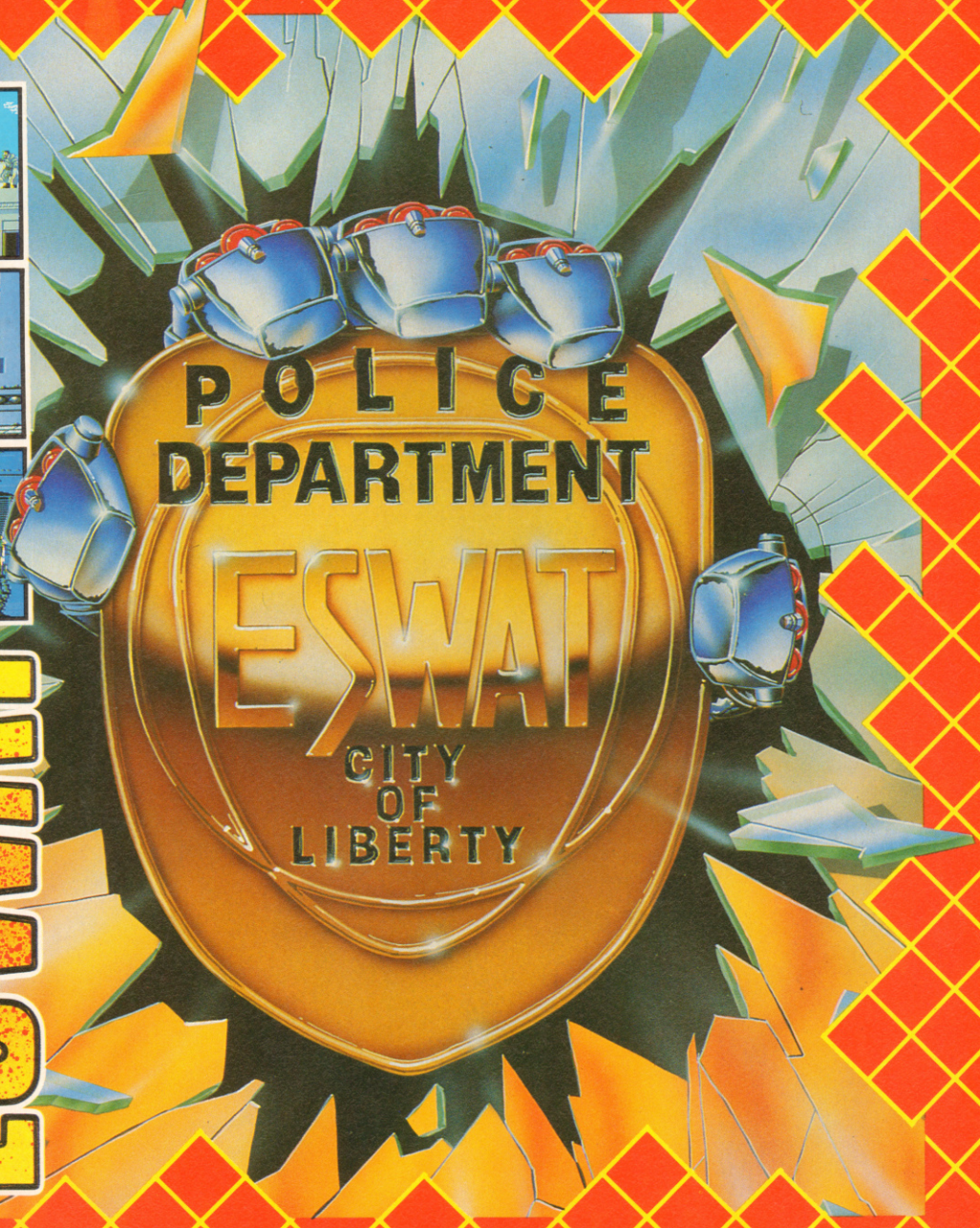

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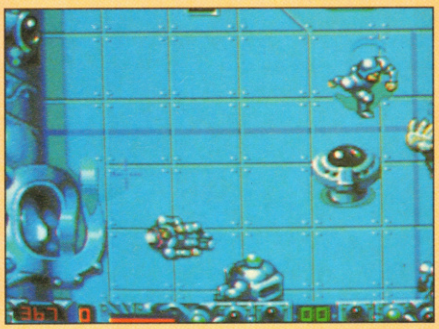
First full review of the portable
KLAX 42

■ Atari Lynx ■



Sensational futuristic sports action
SPEEDBALL 2 28

■ Amiga ■ Atari ST ■

HANDS UP! ...72

All the hand-held gaming consoles you need to know about this Christmas. From the Game Boy to the Game Gear: your thumbs-up guide to what's out, when, and for how much.

ISSUE THREE

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RAZE

Burn rubber, kick some asphalt
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■ NES ■

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Play ball with the gregarious Geordie and perhaps join him later for a sing song.

WIN A SEGA

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FAST FORWARD

DOING T SHUTTLE SHUF

Never one to miss out on a free Coke, Les Ellis travelled almost 400 miles when he heard what Vektor Grafix were offering

Leeds was once described – not by me I hasten to add – as the ash tray of the north. More smelly smoke and dust than a Guy Fawkes bonfire party. But things have changed a bit since then. There's electricity, running water, double yellow lines, even computers. In fact, there are not one but two software development houses.

Coincidentally, they happen to be just a few hundred yards away from each other, and both disturbingly similar in their output. But there's no funny business going on between Vektor Grafix and Realtime, far from it. Although both are producing realistic, solid 3-D games (using different graphics generation routines, of course!), the two companies have a completely different approach to producing games. Realtime are still in the Spectrum days, always wanting to add another routine or design another sprite, not caring about deadlines, whereas Vektor Grafix employ a team of programmers working on two or three projects simultaneously, all to strict deadlines and design briefs. Realtime program for fun and make money in the process, while Vektor Grafix program for money but also have immense fun.

In fact, Vektor, and their leading light Andy Craven, are quite a bunch of lads – anyone with a free Coke machine is alright by me. While immersed in their own projects, they also have a healthy interest in everyone else's games and are more than willing to give you their views. Trouble is, I couldn't get this article to the lawyers in time so you'll have to make do with views on their own games – not as colourful I can assure you.

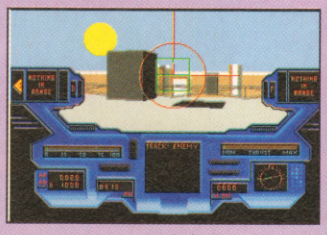
KILLING GAME SHOW

You play the role of a 21st century police officer in San Francisco. The once proud city has been swamped by a mysterious red cloud. The cloud has turned out to be highly toxic and has already wiped out half the population. The job falls to you and your special task force to solve the mystery. Where has the cloud come from? Is it pollution or something more sinister? Can it be stopped? Will anyone be left to care?

Two of the leaders of the Black Angels – approach with extreme caution.

San Francisco is a shell of the city it once was. The streets are now ruled by the Black Angels, a ruthless bunch who have evolved from a lowly street gang into a vicious, high-tech organised crime organisation.

The Streets of San Francisco never looked like this but Karl Malden never had to tackle the Black Angels.

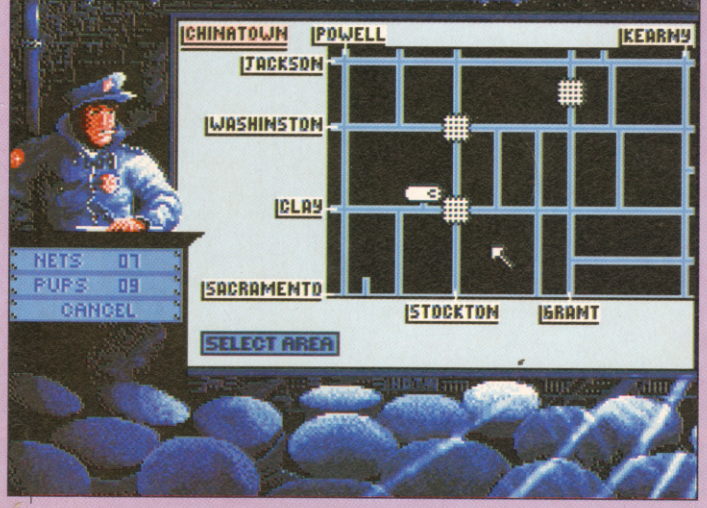


You must ride your jet bike around the city hunting down and apprehending the leaders of the Black Angels. When you track one down, it's not just a case of getting him to pull over and then arresting the man. Once he's captured you must take him back back to the fortified police station where some heavy interrogation can take place. Information can be extracted using truth drugs or electric shock treatment (cruel and heartless, but good fun). Some leaders will prove tougher than others, but it is possible to go too far and kill them altogether (not recommended).

The info that the leaders render will give you certain leads that need to be followed up, some of them hot, some of them not. Make sure the information has good foundation or you could find yourself flogging a dead horse.

Once you have all the clues and leaders, you can set about solving the mystery of the killing cloud. As

Position your back-up in the briefing room.



There's never an end without a beginning.

G THE UFFLE

Kit yourself out with some wicked weapons in the armoury.

with most Vektor Grafix games, there will also be a couple of surprises, so take care.

The game is mostly set in a 3-D vector graphic environment, although scenes like the interrogation take place with conventionally drawn screens. The city of San Francisco has been totally mapped out (including all the hills) and many of the buildings featured in the game are actually in the city (however, the Editor wouldn't let me verify this).

The innovative mixture of 2-D and 3-D should make *The Killing Cloud* the most original game this Christmas, but whether it will have the marketing might to match the coin-op conversions only time will tell.

The Amiga and Atari ST versions will be published by Imageworks for £24.99 before Christmas. The IBM PC version will be out in the New Year and will set you back the princely sum of £29.99. Money well spent.

MOONRAKING

There was once, in the mists of Spectrum history, a flight simulator based around the American space shuttle. Activision had the right idea but the meagre Spectrum couldn't handle the complex, technically accurate game that a shuttle simulator required. Vektor Grafix are now revelling in the opportunity of a space shuttle game, after all these are the guys behind the *Fighter: Bomber* flight sim.

The game has been compiled with help from NASA's own technical specification of the shuttle. The computer game contain every single control switch, knob and flashing light in the real shuttle, and believe me, there are many.

Your mission starts with the shuttle on the launch pad waiting for lift off. Mission Control will help you along your way, and must be kept in constant contact if you expect supervision and help on your mission. Difficulty is based around computer help. On easy level, the computer will highlight a switch that needs attention, while the hardest level will quite happily let you do a Challenger if you fail to keep in contact with Ground Control.

Missions range from taking the ship up with a payload and depositing this cargo in the correct orbit to carrying out on-the-spot repairs of satellites, which could entail a bit of space-walking.

Everything here is done to extreme precision. If you wanted it, the launch sequence alone can last up to five hours! Luckily, there is an advance time option which can speed things up.

The graphics are incredible, wait till you see the shuttle lift off, breathtaking. The sheer size and complexity of this game is just amazing, mind-blowing stuff.

Space Shuttle is scheduled for launch from Virgin Mastertronic around February 1991 on the Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC with the price still to be confirmed.

VEKTOR REFLEKTOR

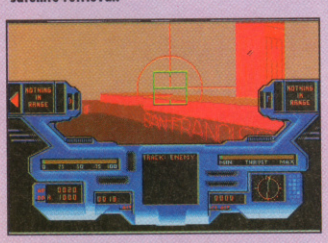
Star Wars (1987)
The Empire Strikes Back (1988)
Fighter: Bomber (1989)
The Killing Cloud (1990)
Space Shuttle (1991)

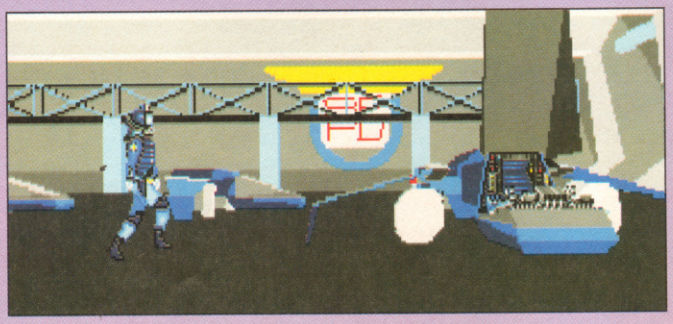
The space shuttle features EVERY knob, switch, flashing light and toilet from the real thing.

If you thought Vektor's Bomber was quick, check out this Space Shuttle. Fast? Just a bit.

Good grounding in Star Wars and The Empire Strikes Back has helped Vektor Grafix in their pursuit for the perfect space game. Space, the final frontier. Watch out for a future data disk featuring a Hubble telescope mission. Fix that and you are doing more than NASA could.

The shuttle's loading bay is where the robot arm is stored, you'll need to master control of this for satellite retrieval.





PREVIEW POSTSCRIPT

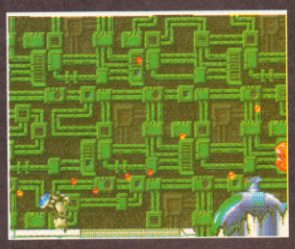
★ Virgin are releasing a 16-bit version (£24.95) of the Sega console hit *Golden Axe* before Christmas. The Mega Drive version is reviewed on page 62 of this issue.

The Amiga version of Sega's *Golden Axe* shows that those darned consoles aren't having it all their own way yet.

★ Marty McFly returns to the screens in the New Year with the release of *Back to the Future III* from Imageworks. The game follows the plot of the hit movie and will be available on the Amiga, Atari ST and IBM PC.

★ Newly formed Renegade are planning to release *Magic Pockets* in March 1991. You'll be the kid who must explore some huge levels to find all his toys. Sounds fun. A bit nearer to release from Renegade is *Gods*, an arcade adventure where you search for freedom and eternal life. It is scheduled for release just after Christmas on all computer formats.

★ Rainbow Arts are releasing a whole batch of stuff in time for Chrimbo. The sequel to *X-Out*, curiously titled *Z-Out*, contains more blasting action as you attempt to take out the planet Alpha Centauri. Amiga and Atari ST versions will be available late November for a mere £19.99.



Remember X-Out. Well, here's Z-Out. God knows what happened to Y-Out!

GAME FOR A LAUGH

Small and respected company, Triffix Graphics, are currently working on Chase HQ and R-Type for the Game Boy. Julian Boardman got his instructions from Nancy and checked them out

Under the close scrutiny of the Japanese big boys, the lads at Triffix have been working hard on these two money-spinners for a few months now. For I-Rem (R-Type) to choose an out of house developer, and particularly one from Europe, it was a big step; for Taito (Chase HQ) this was their first development ever done in Europe – both may be signalling that they and the rest of Japan are beginning to take an interest in the programming skill that abounds in the EC.

Although both games are hardly brand-new, they are widely acknowledged as classics in their own peculiar genre. It was and still is important for this type of well known game to be released on the Game Boy, if only to add to its credibility and sales appeal – whether you like them or not they still sell in their thousands.

R-TYPE

The arcade shoot-'em-up that spawned a thousand and one clones is back with a vengeance on the Game Boy. It's the original and still the very best.

A shoot-'em-up on the Game Boy is always going to be a difficult prospect to accomplish successfully because of the nature of the screen, small and monochrome. If the background is too intricate or dark the action gets lost and the game becomes unplayable. With a game such as *R-Type* it would be all too easy to fall into this trap, sprites all over the place and weapons flying all around like a swarm of possessed mutant hornets. But Triffix saved the day, and still managed to get the details in and some pretty huge sprites to boot.

All the weapons of the original are in this extremely faithful version. I-Rem didn't really leave much scope for creative input, each stage of development had to be authorised by the Japanese headquarters before Triffix could proceed any further with it.

The playability seems to have been retained, it is still as fast and furious as the original, with more huge end of level baddies than you could shake a three-way bouncing laser at. The graphics have some very clever shading and many of the intricacies in the backgrounds and aliens have been are faithfully transferred. The multi-channel sound certainly gets the message across with some searing noises from the tiny speaker.

March of next year should be a good time for shoot-'em-up fans.

CHASE HQ

We all know the scenario, Nancy radios you a message that some nasty tea-leaf has nicked a car, and off you go in your overpowered Porsche and try to apprehend them by bumping them up the exhaust pipe until they burst into flames. Simple enough. The thing is that while you chase them at 159mph, the road twists like a snake and has more bumps than the proverbial camel, forcing you to the edge of your skill threshold as you avoid the slower cars in front and the roadside obstacles.

While you take a minute to observe the scenery you will notice that all the well-known bits are here: the tunnel, the off-road bit with all the tumbleweeds and subtle "Road Closed" signs, and the Miami Vice arrest scene.

The chap you have to catch is quite simple to spot even, in the Game Boy's monochrome – probably due to the fact that he has a large arrow pointing at him. These criminals, eh? Not a bloody clue! I know blokes that used to hang around with the Kray twins, and they never walked around with a great big arrow pointing at them.

Actually, the lack of colour doesn't really make the slightest bit of difference. The action is as fast as any version you could find, and is probably more challenging than both the 16-bit versions. With the silky smooth animation and the skyscraper backgrounds it should be worth watching out for in February.

PREVIEW POSTSCRIPT

★ Electronic Arts are planning to release more console stuff in time for the silly season. John Madden's American Football promises to push the Mega Drive to its limits. (Let's hope not or the machine's life will be over pretty quickly.) It will be available in late November for £39.99.

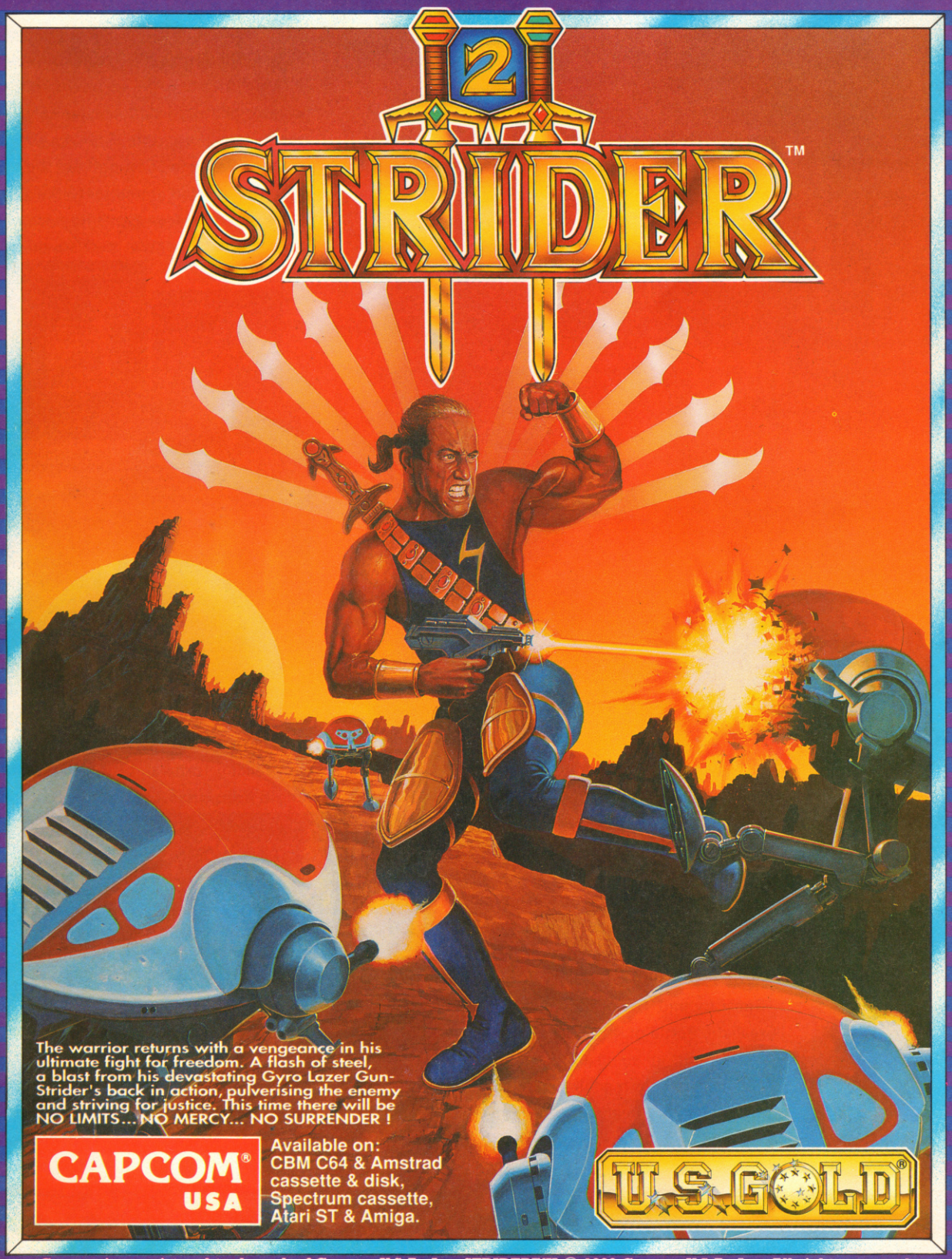
★ Dick Tracy was a pretty novel film but it never really reached the heights of Batman. *Dick Tracy* gets converted by Titus on the Amiga, Atari ST and IBM PC next month for newcomers to the home computer market, Disney Software. Personally, I reckon Disney will become one of the top computer software developers in the next few years.

Dick, mmm, that's an interesting name.

★ *Dragon's Lair II: Timewarp* is imminent as Readysoft are beavering away on the follow-up to Don Bluth's laserdisc hit. Yet again, we're promised more playability than the last game. The Amiga version will appear first, with the Atari ST version following a few months

later. Readysoft are also working on a Mega Drive version of the original game – although don't tell anyone I told you, it's a secret.

NO LIMITS ... NO MERCY ... NO SURRENDER!



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This Christmas, there's a little bit of Commodore in all of us.

Excitement, adventure, daring, call it what you will. The fact remains there's a little bit of it in all of us. That's why you should give a Commodore computer some serious thought this Christmas.

Take the new Amiga 1500. This powerful home computer gives you the ultimate in family entertainment. Screen images that will literally blow your mind and an impressive collection of leisure software . . . Battle Chess, Populous, Sim City and Their Finest Hour, the incredibly realistic Battle of Britain simulation.

Then, in an instant, it can switch to a serious business machine with Platinum Works, everything you need to work from home. Or to your own design/animation studio with Deluxe Paint III. The Amiga 1500 comes complete with 1 full Megabyte of RAM, keyboard, colour monitor and two built-in disk drives for only £1149.99.

Of course, the Amiga 500, recently awarded European Computer of the Year, is still the most coveted computer for kids of all ages. The Amiga 500 takes you into a fantastic world of graphics, animation and sound. It has the power to educate, entertain, inspire and stretch the imagination like no other.

The Commodore Amiga 1500 – £1149.99

"Now, let's see if I can . . ."

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The Commodore Amiga 500.
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"Yes, I'm learning fast . . ."

and introductory video. At just £599.99 it's a small price to help any child throughout their academic life.

And when class is over, there's our new Amiga 500 'Screen Gems' pack which includes Deluxe Paint II and four new challenges, each based on a blockbuster movie; Back to the Future II, Nightbreed, Shadow of the Beast II and the devastating Days of Thunder for only £399.99.

On the subject of fun and games, we present a totally new double pack for the C64, undoubtedly the world's favourite games computer. If brain-stretching tasks are your forte, choose 'Mindbenders' with Confuzion, Split Personalities and Trivial Pursuits. Or if it's pure escapism you prefer, there's 'Night Moves' with

The Commodore 64. Mindbenders and Night Moves – £159.99*

"I'll give it my best shot..."

the compelling Midnight Resistance, Nightbreed, Secret Agency Sly Spy and Shadow Warriors. The C64 computer comes with data cassette and two joysticks and is outstanding value at £159.99.

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X/Ra/a

SIGHTS ON CD

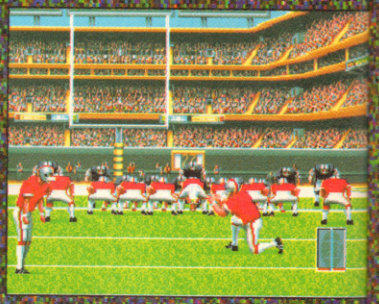
Beta versions of Commodore's mass market CDTV system are now available. Paul Rigby spoke to top US developer Cinemaware about the system, their first original game for it, and the cynical coverage it has already received

FULL MOTION IGNORANCE?

Computer Trade Weekly, the industry newspaper, recently published an article by Steve Cooke, editor of ACE magazine, in which Steve gave his opinion on Commodore's CDTV system. The chap seems to have created quite a stir at top US developer Cinemaware. Not due to their anticipation for the product but because of their disbelief in the article. Bob Jacob of Cinemaware spoke to RAZE about some of the points made within that article.

Among the items that grated against Bob was Steve's belief that the public have the misconception of expecting Full Motion Video (FMV) capability from the CDTV – and that they'll be disappointed when they find out CDTV doesn't support FMV. Also, Steve criticised those companies that are promising "interactive movies" and the like, on the basis that such comments are, basically, hype and ignorance on the part of the developers. However, according to Bob Jacob, "He [Steve Cooke] was totally wrong. He could not be more wrong. He's confusing FMV with a video look. You don't need FMV to have a video-like appearance. For example, there's *It Came from the Desert* for NEC TurboGrafx-16 [PC Engine] CD-ROM. Obviously, it is not capable of doing FMV. What it is capable of doing is 10-12 frames of synchronised audio video in a window on the screen. If you're very clever in how you design the product it looks indistinguishable from FMV.

"Here's another example. Imagine someone digitises the



Superbowl status is assured for Cinemaware's TV Sports Football when it appears in winter 1991. (Original versions pictured.)

NEW BALLS PLEASE!

It will "blow everybody's mind," says Cinemaware's Bob Jacob of their first product designed specifically for the CDTV. As the follow-up to the disk-based hit of last year, *TV Sports Football 2* (*TVSF2*) will probably never see the light of day on any other machine – quite strange considering Cinemaware's strong links with NEC and their PC Engine CD-ROM system.

Bob Jacob reveals that, "The whole product will have a video look to it. There are a lot of sequences of coaches ranting and raving on the sidelines – all done in video. It strongly resembles live television. We are working very closely with one of the college football teams on this project [Bob wouldn't say who]. It's a quantum leap over the first version."

The game interface is an improvement over the original. It is as much an arcade game as *TVSF* but the play will be on a higher level. "One of the problems with *TVSF* was that we had to design it for play on other computers as well, such as the C64. That brought limitations into the design. For example, in the original version of the game the offensive and defensive lines are, basically, blocks. Holes could open within them but they aren't addressable individual characters. In *TVSF2* we have 22 independent characters on the field which makes the action more realistic. It will be the definitive football game."

The program will take around three man-years to produce, excluding the time to design programming tools for the CDTV, so don't expect to see the finished product till late 1991.

A low hedge is easily leaped over.

THE REST

Of course CDTV and CD-I are not the only games in town. What other formats are Cinemaware involved with?

"We haven't developed for the FM Towns yet. We licensed one of our products, *Rocket Ranger*, to the Towns. That was programmed by Pony Canyon in Japan.

"In terms of the TurboGrafx-16 CD-ROM. In addition to *It Came From the Desert* we are doing a joint venture with JVC in Japan of our product *Lords of the Rising Sun*. We're doing music and audio for it, they're doing the programming and the graphics."

It Came on the PC Engine, and it comes on the CDTV soon.

front of a house and you slap that up on a TV. The door opens. There is a character standing in the doorway, talking. Now the house is not moving. The house can be a still picture. It's only the character in the door that's moving. It's a question of design." Just to reiterate what Bob's saying. If a piece of software is designed properly, the lack of FMV on the CDTV will not be a problem.

"A FMV chip will allow you to store 72 minutes of full-screen FMV on CD. Which is fine, but where is the interactive aspect? What really pissed me off about Steve Cooke's article was that he's saying that other people had been hyping public expectation for CD. The fact is – we know exactly what we are doing. In terms of *Desert* and *Football*, etc, if you know what you're doing, it ain't that tough." So Bob is declaring that he hasn't being hyping anything. His company is perfectly capable of all it promises.

Cinemaware's Bob Jacob (above): "He [Steve Cooke] was totally wrong. He could not be more wrong. He's confusing FMV with a video look. You don't need FMV to have a video-like appearance."

"If it looks like Full Motion and you can interact with it, people are going to be happy. Whether it is or whether it isn't FMV – who really cares? Most people, us included, believe that you've got to have a video look if there's going to be a mass market. Computer graphics will not be acceptable to a market that's been weaned on television. If you make it look like television and make it interactive, it's going to work. We can do that with CDTV without FMV.

"There are a lot of mutterings and posturings from people who don't understand video. Ultimately, FMV will become very important in the industry. However, you won't see commercial software until around 1993 and the majority of the industry hasn't even come to terms with how you manipulate an image at all, even a still video image. Let's crawl before we walk.

"Spare me from writers who don't have a clue! I talk with these guys who view everything from such a long distance they have no idea of what's really going on. They form generalizations about businesses which they are barely familiar with. I wish that before Cooke had written that article he had called me."

CINEMA-FLAIR

"What we're trying to do with *TV Sports Football 2* (see box) is to say that there is more that can be done and we're going to do our best to produce a product that will break out into the mass market. Multimedia has got to be a mass market. I don't care which format or formats are ultimately successful. The fact is, if multimedia machines only appeal to those who like computer games then we are in trouble – the costs will be prohibitive for a start."

Cinemaware's Bob Jacob expressing his CD trepidations. A natural state of mind considering that CD in all its forms is such ground-breaking media. Not only directly but indirectly with the production of the CDTV and CD-I.

Bob recognises the difficulties of CD, both as a developer and as a commentator on CD's potential in the marketplace. However, he is supremely confident in his own company's ability to come up with the goods. Not only for computer enthusiasts, but for the couch-potato who wouldn't know a computer chip from a french fry.

"It is difficult to work in video and make it interactive. Most developers have no experience in video whatsoever. So there's a learning curve they'll have to face in terms of how you deal with actors, how you deal with lighting, how you take those images that you've created in analogue video and convert them to digital and then integrate them into a viewing environment. We had a leg up because we've been doing that type of thing for some time now."

That is not to say that all the problems have been solved yet. Sync time, the notion of how you keep things moving, accessing the drive and knowing how to lay data on the disk to minimise disk access time, are all recurring problems that are still being tackled in the Cinemaware offices.

It is pretty certain, though, that Cinemaware's forward thinking policy of producing movieware such as *Rocket Ranger, It Came from the Desert, TV Sports* and *Defender of the Crown* will establish Cinemaware as a leading contender in the realms of CD.

Defender of the Crown put Cinemaware in good stead for the interactive movies expected on CDTV.

COMPACT STORIES

● The FM Towns, as it stands, is a very disappointing machine. The transfer rate is very slow, so slow it's commercially inviable. CDTV transfers 150K per second off the disk – the FM Towns transfers a mere 45K per second. If the FM Towns appears in the USA or the UK many observers believe it will undergo a drastic re-design. It will likely include MS-DOS as standard and therefore become PC compatible. Also, if it is to compete in the PC compact disk market, the transfer rate will need to be uprated. Maybe this is the reason for the extended delays on its Western release date. We will see.

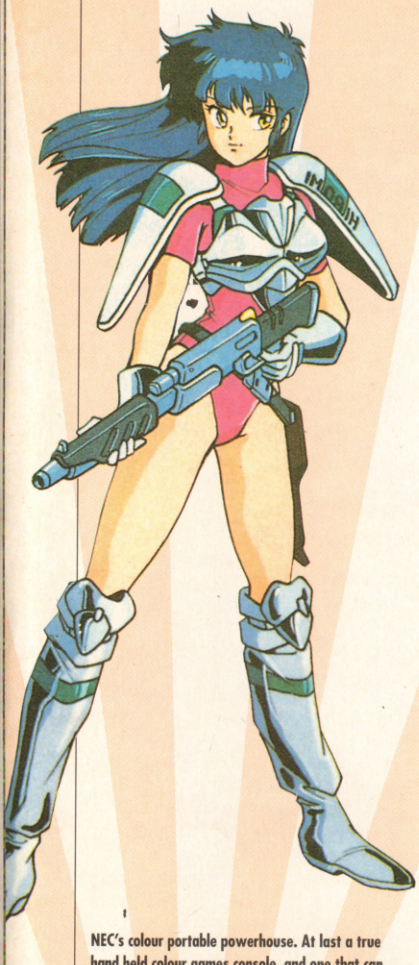
● The PC Engine CD-ROM has the largest CD user base in the world at the moment (at least 350,000). It is hoped that 100,000 machines will form a significant user-base in the States within the year.

The PC Engine has the largest amount of CD-ROM users in the world. If only NEC would release the thing over here...

● The movie business is moving in! Warner New Media are busy producing CD applications, initially on the CD+G (Compact Disc plus Graphics – similar to the CDTV format) standard. CD+G has been around for 3-4 years. There are audio CDs out there that are capable of producing graphics if your CD player has the capacity (Lou Reed's New York, Fleetwood Mac's Behind the Mask, etc). Walt Disney are also becoming aggressive towards software. Expect CD applications from this area soon.

● If and when multimedia takes off, who do you think will be the main distributor and high street retailer? The money is on record companies and home video operations run by movie studios. These guys are major players – they make the likes of Electronic Arts USA, Ocean, US Gold, etc look rather silly in comparison. Software companies will probably end up signing label deals similar to the deals present in the record business.

BIG IN



After discovering that he wouldn't get a smart bomb by joining the Japanese army, Shintaro Kanaoya decided to nip into the RAZE offices and tell of his wonderful experiences with Suzy Uki... ahem, reveal the latest goings-on in Japan

Minasama Yokoso. In addition to last issue's sex(ism) in software, I proudly present *Zak McKracken and the Mindbenders*. "Pardon me", I hear you ask, "*Zak McKracken* by Lucasfilm?" Absolutely. Well, in a very roundabout way. You see, Zak is to appear on the fabled CD-ROM for the FM Towns. For the Japanese launch Fujitsu – Japan's makers of the Towns and largest computer company – have asked cartoonist Hikaru Hirotsuki to do the all-new illustrations. Herein lies the sex angle. This artist is best known for his comic strip, Minna Agechau. This roughly translates to 'I give you my all' or 'what you see is what you get.' You get the idea. Not much sex – sorry – but worth mentioning, I thought, because apparently Lucasfilm approved the drawings. They obviously haven't seen Mr Hirotsuki's other works of art.

PAIN IN THE NEC

The portable PC Engine GT will be on sale in Japan, and will doubtless be offered to you by grey importers in the UK at a ludicrous price, by the time you read this. But what does the GT stand for? Gross Tomatoes.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the PC Engine Gross Tomatoes will cost your average Japanese punter approximately £172.30. Cheap at twice the price when you consider that it can, with the use of an optional tuner, become a colour portable TV. So, a machine that can play games and be a television. Some say, that GT stands for Games and Television. I'm sticking with Giant Turtles.

NEC's colour portable powerhouse. At last a true hand held colour games console, and one that can easily switch to a TV.

So what will the Grieving Tribble be able to play? As you must already know, it can play anything that the PC Engine can play. So this month that means the following:

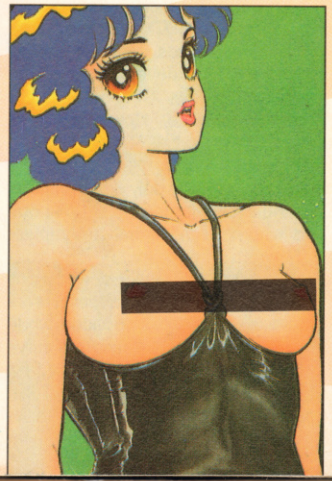
From Namco there's *Märchen Maze*. You get to play a red-shoed, red-skirted, white-aproned, white-bloused, red-ribboned, blonde-haired little brat that has to travel through a cute and colourful land full of bubbles, balloons, hearts, grinning Cheshire cats and other characters taken out of Alice in Wonderland. All this game needs now is a death sequence where Alice's eyes drop out and explode, where the mad hatter jumps out of her stomach shouting "Heeeere's Johnny!" and smears the screen with her blood, and where the game then crashes and prevents you continuing any further. I should be a games designer. I'm wasted here. RAZE today, Horrorsoft tomorrow.

From Taito is the much more civilised *Champion Wrestler*. Punch,

Epson's new PC Club. A 10MHz '286 machine with EGA graphics boasting IBM PC compatibility.

NOW THAT'S THICK CHOCOLATE

There's a new machine just launched in Japan from Epson called the PC Club. Epson are dubbing it a 'hobby use machine' – however, at around £650, hobbyists are dubbing it 'too expensive!' The PC Club is not a console; it's a full-blown IBM PC compatible complete with keys and floppy drives. Styled much like the ST and Amiga, the Club contains a 10MHz 80286 processor and comes with 640K of RAM. The Club comes with EGA graphics (16 colours onscreen from a palette of 64) as standard and is fitted with twin 3.5-inch floppy drives. Naturally the machine runs the abundance of PC games software.



JAPAN

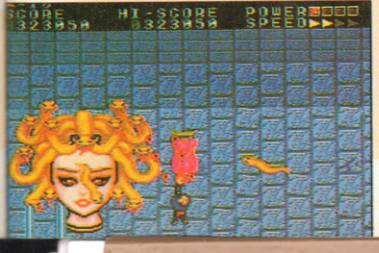
kick and generally inflict copious amounts of pain on your computer or human opponent. Up to four players can join in the action simultaneously. Also from Taito is *Parasol Stars: Bubble Bobble 3*. More vomit-worthy cute antics from the stars of *Bubble Bobble* and *Rainbow Islands*. This is a game unique to the Engine and has possibly been released to appease angry gamers still waiting for *Rainbow Islands*.

Thunder Blade is at last making an appearance from NEC Avenue on the Engine. It's a 2-D and 3-D shoot-'em-up in a helicopter, and is based on the coin-op which appeared centurys ago. *Thunder Blade* is one of the first games to use the new analogue joystick. NEC Avenue have also got *3-D Shogi. Shogi* – an ancient Japanese board game steeped in tradition. The 3-D version requires you to move monsters around the screen and enter into battle when two opposing pieces meet. Sound familiar? *Battle Chess*... Same idea, different rules.

Toy-Shop Boy is Victor's latest release. It's a cute shoot-'em-up set in a toy shop. Bad dudes include Medusa-like Barbie dolls, metal robots and fluffy teddy bears. Well, it's different. Also from my mates at Vic, is *TV Sports Football*. You know the one, Cinemaware, smarmy TV presenter, cheerleaders... Oh yeah, and some American football.

From Human there's *Bastille*, a futuristic battle game involving strategy and action. Sounds like PSS's *Theatre Europe* only more like *Theatre Somewhere in Deep Dark Space*.

Barbie's trying hard to survive without Ken in *Toy-Shop Boy* on the PC Engine.



Enjoy the anitcs of the cute blonde-haired bimbo in the cute and colourful *Märchen Maze* on the PC Engine.

Zipang is an interesting number to watch out for from Pack-in-Video. This is an action-puzzle game which looks similar to *Solomon's Key.* You have to negotiate a load of blocks, find a key and rush to the exit. What could be simpler?

That's not all the PC Engine releases this month by any stretch, but the ones mentioned are most likely to find their way into Britain.

OF MODEMS AND MEGA DRIVES

Onto the Mega Drive. On the hardware side, the Sega Mega Drive's modem has hit the streets and phone lines in a big way. The modem's main use, it seems, is as a communication link between two or more games players via the phone lines. Naturally the games have to be modem compatible, and obviously you can't use it in Britain at the moment. Some of the games you might never be able to play down the phone line in the UK are *Cyberball, Mah Jong* and *Baseball.*

Ordinary Mega Drive releases follow. *Shining and Darkness* (*Dungeon Master*) from the makers of the hugely successful *Dragon Quest* series comes out in March 1991. Watch this space.

Darius 2 looks like a goody. Flash graphics, big bosses, scenic backgrounds, neat weapons. Bet you can't wait.

In Japan the Mega Drive Modem sells for a little under £50 – epect it to cost two or three times that if it ever makes it to the UK. After all, the Mega Drive itself costs under £80 in Japan and £180 in the UK!

Dynamite Duke is an arcade conversion I missed (and that wasn't because I was playing strip Mah-Jong games) that should hit a cartridge slot near you soon. *Duke* looks like *Operation Wolf* and *Thunderbolt* except you're in the picture and can go up close to the enemies and punch and kick as well as shoot.

Become Stringfellow Hawke in *Super Airwolf*; kill enemies on foot with a hyper-gun or in the air using the super chopper's armoury. Another shoot-'em-up with a movie tie-in.

OH, GAME BOY

Seeing as the Game Boy usually gets left to the end, I'll mention it before any word of the Super Famicom this month. Phew, I managed it – but only just.

On the green and black Game Boy there are loads of Japanese RPGs not worth mentioning. Partly because they probably won't appear in the UK and mostly because I've drunk too much saki and can't read the Japanese text too well. Hic...

What is worth mentioning though, is *F-1 Boy*. This is a race game viewed from above a formula one racing track. Great fun – especially in simultaneous two-player mode.

Also on the way are *Astro Rabby*, where you play a space rabbit and have to rescue some dim-witted professor, *Chase HQ*, and *Burger Time Special.*

Actually, there's not a lot for me to say about the Super Famicom this month. *Populous* is coming out on December 21st; programmer Peter Molyneux now seems happy with the control method which was his main concern (as it was mine, and still is in the case of *Dungeon Master*). *Bombuzal, Super Mario World* and *F-Zero* are to be released simultaneously, all at around £25.

That's it for another month. I would like to leave you with an ancient Japanese proverb passed onto me by my cousin shortly before he was born: hayaku detai na. Which translates to 'I can't wait to get out of here.' A comment on contemporary life in the '90s from beyond the womb. Very deep. Anyhow, it's konnichi wa from me. Abayo.

RELEASES IN BRIEF

PC ENGINE

Bastille – strategy game set a few odd years in the future. Out on CD-ROM.

Champion Wrestler – speaks for itself. Punches for itself. In fact, four-player punches for itself.

Märchen Maze – sickeningly cute arcade adventure.

Parasol Stars – sequel to *Rainbow Islands* and *Bubble Bobble*. Guaranteed to make you remember what yesterday's lunch looked like.

Thunder Blade – egg-beater, egg-beater, bang, bang, egg-beater, egg-beater.

Toy-Shop Boy – fight really scary teddy bears and Ken & Barbie dolls in your local Hamlys.

Zipang – arcade puzzle with a resemblance to *Solomon's Key*. Another CD-ROM release.

MEGA DRIVE

Shining and Darkness – won't be out until next year. Keep an eye out for it. Two, if you can spare both.

Darius 2 – shoot-'em-up with big pretty graphics and hectic action. *Dynamite Duke* – coin-op conversion. Bang, bang, fists, feet, naked aggression, violence. Yeah!

Super Airwolf – based loosely on the TV programme. In short, a violent shoot-'em-up.

GAME BOY

F-1 Boy – Overhead multi-player formula one racing game.

Astro Rabby – space rabbit rescues professor. Weird.

SUPER FAMICOM

Populous – and the world will be created on December 21st. The Game. The Machine.

Super Mario World – would you stay up all night playing the part of a fat Italian? Me neither!

SEGA CITY

by Julian Boardman

Got a Sega? Plug into City, the only dedicated Sega column this side of the Milky Way for the Mega Drive and Master System. For the latest coverage of the country's favourite consoles stay right here. Thinking of buying any other console? Do me a favour...

According to Virgin's Lesley Walker, the Game Gear, Sega's hand-held console, should be officially available in the spring of 1991 for a price of no more than £130. As to whether any software houses are developing software over here, she wouldn't say...

However, US Gold did let it slip that they have plans for product on the Mega Drive *and* the Game Gear to complement their existing developments on the Master System.

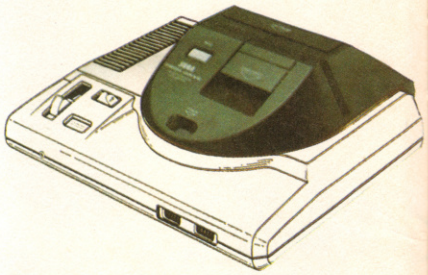
Other news this month:

■ Release dates for the four Master System games from US Gold reviewed in this issue – *Indy III*, *Gauntlet*, *Impossible Mission* and *Paperboy* – will be approximately a week after the carts arrive from Japan. Which means that it's going to be just before Christmas all things going according to plan.

■ Anyone who's worried about the compatibility of their grey import Mega Drive with English games, or their English Mega Drive with Japanese games need fear no longer. Medlantic (% 0455 291865) have come up with a two-way converter, called, imaginatively, the Medcon. This little plug-in works on all Mega Drives and allows them to run software from any origin. Total compatibility will cost you just £19.99. These enterprising chaps will also be holding the Game Gear which should be in stock now. Although initial grey import prices were over £200, they expect prices to drop nearer to the proposed official prices soon.

■ Virgin have just released the official Master System converter for the Mega Drive. It allows Mega Drive owners full compatibility, including 3-D glasses and light gun, with all cards and carts on the Master System. It retail for £29.99 and is a great incentive for Master System owners looking to upgrade to the Mega Drive, but worried about having a redundant software collection. Still, Sega are hoping to shift 600,000 Euro Master Systems in the three-month build up to Christmas as opposed to just 100,000 Mega Drives. Which one will you be buying?

Increase the value of your Mega Drive by 50% when purchasing the Master System Converter.



AXIS

WOLF TEAM ■ ARCADE ACTION

Well, there you are, dressed in a hideously overstocked exo-skeleton, each part of it making up a weapon, when you suddenly find the need to take a pee. What do you do? Not much you can do really with all these helicopters buzzing you and very futuristic tanks parading down the future-shocked high street. Okay, you can try to blast your way to a toilet, but even if you do get to it there is no guarantee that it is going to have a workable flush. Add this to the fact that at any moment some vicious cyborg might come along and blow you away while you're struggling with your rivet-fly, and the life of a warrior in the future cannot be easy.

In the meantime, of course, you have a certain number of enemies to destroy with the impressive, yet limited, number of weapons. As soon as you see them on the eight-way scrolling isometric landscape, blast 'em out of sight.

The challenging levels have an increasing number and variety of enemies to waste. By the third level it starts to get extremely difficult and will no doubt provide a few months of good clean fun.

Graphics are stunning, presenting a 3-D view not seen on the Mega Drive before. Scrolling of the immense play area and movement of the large characters is speedy, but does suffer from lock-up when tons of sprites appear onscreen.

Sound is a real disappointment. There was a great opportunity for a pounding soundtrack and some super spot effects which has been missed. Gameplay makes up for this somewhat, but still takes a while to familiarize yourself with the new perspective.

Overall, it seems like *Axis* started off as a really great concept, but was let down by the graphics overtaking the rest of the program..

Sega, so good.

MEGA DRIVE UK TOP TEN

1. Golden Axe
2. Revenge of Shinobi
3. Truxton
4. Alex Kidd/Enchanted Castle
5. Forgotten Worlds
6. Super Thunderblade
7. Space Harrier II
8. Super Hang-On
9. Rambo III
10. Mystic Defendor

MASTER SYSTEM UK TOP TEN

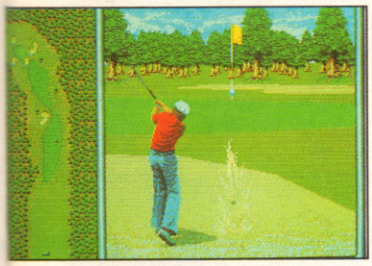
1. Golden Axe
2. Chase HQ
3. Operation Wolf
4. Battle Out Run
5. Double Dragon
6. Galaxy Force
7. Golfmania
8. Enduro Racer
9. RC Grand Prix
10. Wonderboy III

E-SWAT – CITY UNDER SIEGE

E-Swat has already appeared on grey import for the Mega Drive, but this is the official Master System version based on the Sega arcade machine. The games gives more than a nod in the direction of RoboCop, setting you in the boots of a normal policeman who has to prove his worth to join the futuristic E-SWAT (Extra-Special Weapons and tactics) division. It combines elements of strategy and action as you make your way through the five rounds, each made up of four stages. Each stage has its own tyrant, as does the end of every level. Total arcade action from Sega.

COLUMNS

Yet another one of those *Tetris*-inspired puzzle games, but this one also shares something with Game Boy's *Dr Mario*, probably a padded cell.



Get a full review next month as crafty columns heads for RAZE Rave status – perhaps.

The object is to make a three-unit row, diagonally, vertically or horizontally, from the multi-coloured blocks of three that drop from above. The lengths that drop can be cycled so that the colours are exactly where you want them, the top colour goes to the bottom and the others move up one.

Time is against you as they drop very quickly, and if you run out of space you're history. Once a connection has been made the pieces involved disappear leaving those around it to do what gravity does to them. This can lead to quite complex and productive chain reactions which are great for stuffing your opponent on the two-player game.

The spoilt screen two-player option involves the same principle, but if one guy does well the other player's base shifts up a few rows. This results in a reduction in the size of the play area and increases the player's chances of running out of space and overflowing off the top of the screen, thus finishing the game.

The isn't the first game of this type, and no doubt won't be the last, but the addictive qualities flood from the game inviting you to have one more battle against a friend.

CALLING ALL SEGAPHILES

Get sending those titbits of salacious gossip and tricky tips into *Sega City, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH.* The best tip printed each month gets the author a great game for his or her machine..

HACK ATTACK

THUNDER FORCE 3
Mega Drive

To play around with the game parameters press A, B, C and Start at the same time. Thanks to Patrick Wakeham of Exeter.

REVENGE OF SHINOBI
Mega Drive

To get infinite shurikens, select 00 on the options screen. Now wait and watch the zeros join together into an infinite sign. Every other letter seemed to contain this tip, so cheers to everyone!

AFTER BURNER II
Mega Drive

Press Start to get to the options screen, then hold down buttons A, B, C and Start. You will now be able to select levels 1-20 using left or right. That was brought to you by some anonymous idiot from Dartford – still he must be if he lives in Dartford.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
Mega Drive

In two-player mode, let one player collect all the zennies so he can buy the good stuff at the shop. At the end of the level make sure that the penniless player dies, he will then reappear just after the start of the next level with all the equipment of the rich player. Tricky tipster James Chase from Essex sent that beauty in.

TRUXTON/TATSUJIN
Mega Drive

When using a smart bomb, keep your finger on pause for a complete wipeout. This came from someone purporting to be one Mr Bean.

THUNDER BLADE
Master System

On the title screen, press up, down, left and then right (in that order) for an indestructible helicopter. Thank you Mr Baked.

ACTION FIGHTER
Master System

Enter SPECIAL as your name to make you bullet-proof and give you three extra lives.

ALTERED BEAST
Master System

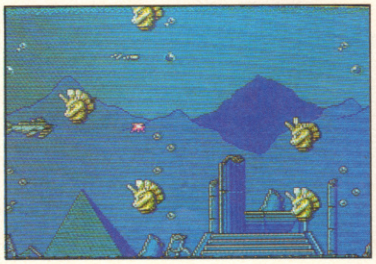
Press down-left and both fire buttons on the joypad to continue a second time, down-right and fires for a third time, and up-right with both buttons for a fourth continue.

ENDURO RACER
Master System

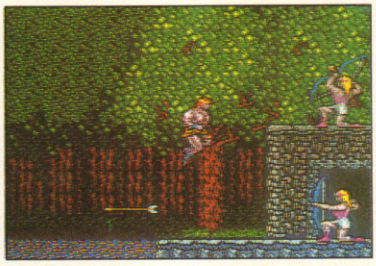
If you want to jump levels on the title screen press Reset, then up, down, left, right on the joypad.

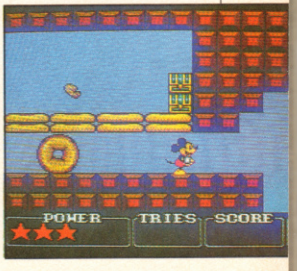
SPACE HARRIER
Master System

To change the game parameters, select tunes 7,4,3,7,4,8 and 1 from the sound test menu. When you finish a game, press up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, down, up and down. This allows you to continue nine times.



Do me a favour... spare me from Neighbours.



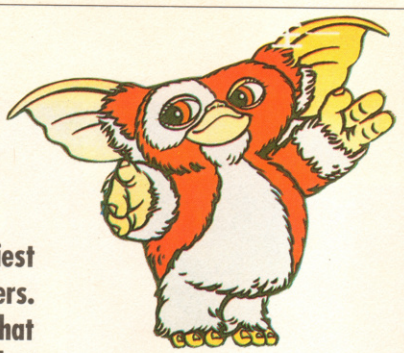


From left to right *Submarine Attack, Danan – Jungle Fighter* and *Mickey Mouse.* The next three titles due for release on the Master System.

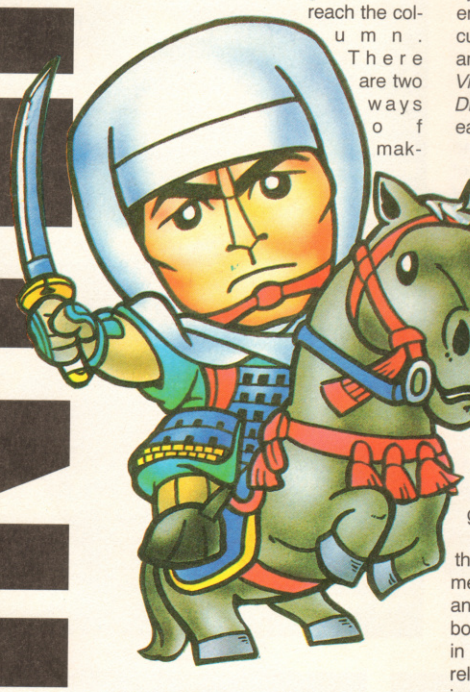
NINTENDO NARLY

By Cole Trickle

Nintendo are the mightiest of all the console producers. There's never a month that goes by without some hot news concerning either the NES, Game Boy, Super Famicon or their infamous cartridge software. If you want to keep in touch with what's happening in Nintendosville, keep in RAZE.



There's so much to tell you about, it's hard to know where to begin. Good news for NES owners this month as details of two firms importing Japanese/American game carts reach the column. There are two ways of making foreign carts work on a British machine: convert the carts themselves or adapt the machine to accept them.



Scottish firm, Unitec Systems, have decided to go for the former and split carts apart, rip out the Nintendo lock chip and slap in one of their own. Of course, this invalidates Nintendo's warranty but Unitec assure RAZE that everything is legit and buyers will be covered by Unitec's own warranty. Quite how long Unitec will be able to continue doing this without Nintendo slapping some writ on them remains to be seen.

I've had a few carts to test out and they run perfectly well on the British system (only *Double Dragon* flickered when it scrolled). The games currently available include *Gauntlet* and *Super Sprint* (both £34.95), *Vindicators, Alien Syndrome, Double Dragon* and *Bad Dudes* (£39.95 each). All prices include P+P.

Newly-formed Medlantic are wasting no time and importing 400 NES titles from Japan. With their gadgy adaptor (£34.95 including *Operation Wolf*), you'll be able to run any of the import games on the NES or Super Famicon. I've yet to see this in action, but their Sega adaptors are top-notch. Software – which includes *Rambo II, Garfield, Space Harrier, Shinobi, Top Gun II, Chase HQ II* and *Ghostbusters II* – ranges from £24.95 up to £70 for a 76-game compilation cart.

Medlantic will also be handling all the new Nintendo hardware. That means the Super Famicon machine and the NES keyboard (yes, keyboard!), both of which should now be in stock. There'll be 40 games released with the Super Famicon, including *Populous, Dungeon Master* and *Sim City*. Give 'em a ring!

■ Unitec Systems: 8 James Street, Helensburgh G84 8AS. Tel: (0436) 79123.

■ Medlantic: 10 Church Street, Market Bosworth, Warwickshire CV13 0LG. Tel: (0445) 291865.

GAME BOY TOP TEN IN JAPAN

1. Family Stadium
2. Tetris
3. Super Mario Land
4. Dr Mario
5. Bomber Boy
6. Lum
7. Double Dragon
8. SD Gundam
9. Pat-Labor
10. Sa.Ga

NINTENDO NIBBLERS

SUPER MARIO LAND

Game Boy

Mickey Goff (madeupname) of Cheshire has sent in the location of the secret rooms.

World Pipe Number.

1-1 3 & 6
1-3 9
2-1 1 & last
2-2 1 & last
3-1 3 & last
3-2 7
3-3 4
4-1 1 & 34 (before the stack of guns)
4-2 2 & 12 (use your gun to collect all the gems)

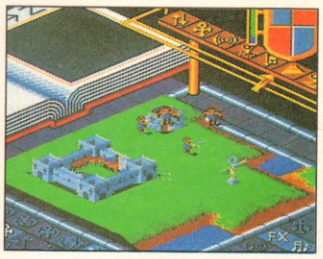
MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH OUT

NES

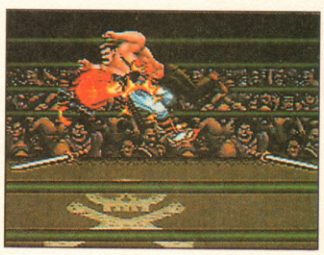
Spinney Chelveston of Wolverhampton has another of those tips for meeting silly opponents. The code is: 135 792 468 0. Hold down select and press A and B together – this will get you to meet the great King Hippo!

FABULOSO FAMICOM

The machine may not even be on the streets yet, but there's a load of Super Famicon stuff just waiting to burst onto the scene. As for the availability of the Super Famicon, well, of course they'll be grey imports around. After phoning a few compa-



Released on the NES and now lined up for the Super Famicon, Bullfrog's Populous.



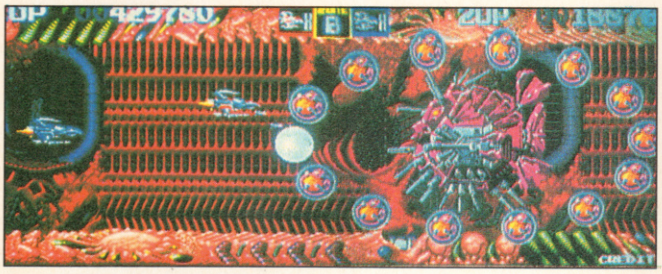
Who said the Super Famicon has poor graphics capabilities? They were lying as Final Fight shows.

NINTENDO PORN

Have you ever wondered where all that Japanese pornography is? After all, the Nintendo Entertainment System is the biggest selling Jap machine of the lot. Well, truth is, you'd be hard pushed to get hold of any of it on the NES. The console is promoted as a family machine, and although such games would go down a storm in Japan, the wholesome American market would frown upon such activities. That's why the Japs keep their fruity software to the IBM PC and MSX. Makes you wish RAZE was covering MSX now, doesn't it? If anyone disapproves of this fun software, I'll be happy to enter into a long discussion about repressive Christian attitudes etc. Pictured is Elf's raunchy *Ray Gun* RPG.

nies, most put a £200 pricemark on it (it sells in Japan for £100). Nintendo UK said that the Super Famicon will be released in the United States in around a year's time with the UK version probably following a year later. Depressing isn't it? Indeed, the source at Nintendo expressed their own regrets that the machine couldn't get here any quicker, but it was out of the UK firm's hands.

Everyone knows about the next Mario game, *Super Mario Bros 4* – *Super Mario World*, but have you actually seen anything of it? Take it from me that the game will have the same impact as the original which appeared over five years ago on the NES.



R-Type II on the Super Famicon is the best version of the lot.

First reports of the SF have indicated that it may have pretty dire graphics capabilities – fear not, I've actually seen some games and they look just as good as the Mega Drive. A fine example of the SF's super graphics are *Final Fight* (a *Renegade*-type game) and *Big Run*. If these two games are as playable as all other NES games, they're going to be something special.

Other joys to behold on the Super Famicon are *Sim City*, *R-Type II* and *Bombuzal*.

NES TOP TEN IN JAPAN

1. Doraemon
2. Dr Mario
3. Super Mario III
4. World Cup Soccer
5. Tetris
6. Super Mario I
7. Dragon Quest 4
8. Final fantasy 3
9. Dragon Quest 3
10. SD Heroes

EAST TO NES

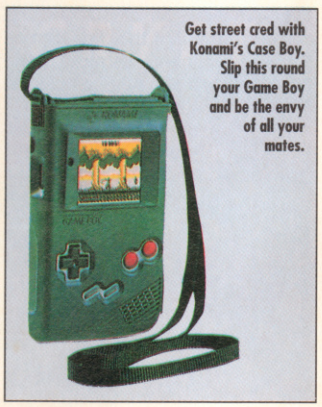
The most annoying part of being a NES owner in the UK is seeing all those great games available in America and Japan knowing that you're not going to get your hands on them for over a year because of Nintendo's poor commitment to the British market.

Just check out these great games that fellow Nessies worldwide will be playing this Christmas.

First off is the omnipresent *Klax*, a great game that can't fail on any format. Last issue's Mega Drive smash *Insector X* hits the breeze block before Christmas, as does this issue's *Gremlins 2*, programmed by *Batman* developers Sunsoft. Remember that old game *Shufflepuck Cafe*, the weird Broderbund shovepuck oddity, well it too is coming out on the NES. RPG fans should go wild at the news of Origin's *Times of Lore* which gets a December release, plus three AD&D titles following close behind. And final news that *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2* is already in development for a spring release.

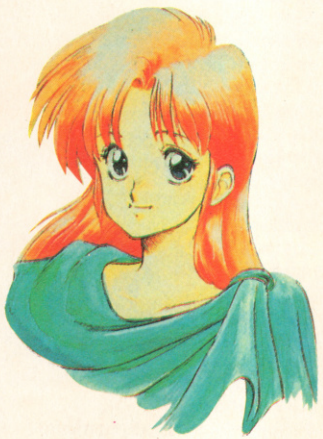
GUNNING FOR THE GAME BOY

Every game seems to fit perfectly on the Game Boy. Take *Pipe Mania*, for example. Just the job for the Game Boy's little screen. The game is already finished, under the outside-UK title, *Pipe Dream*, and should be out in the UK before Santa pops round for a visit. Entertainment International will be handling the UK distribution. Bet you can't wait.



Get street cred with Konami's Case Boy. Slip this round your Game Boy and be the envy of all your mates.

There are loads of Game Boy games being developed in Japan at the moment. There's the detective spoof *Scotland Yard*, a mind-blowing puzzle game called *Palamedes*, *Gremlins 2* (which looks great!), *Boulderdash*, *Motocross*, *Roadster*, *Fleet Commander* and – get this – *Pac-Man*! Yes, the old chomper's back in town.



METROID

NES

Using the code JUSTIN BAILEY will turn you into a woman so you can get whatever weapons you want. They always get what they want don't they?

NEMESIS

Game Boy

Some nameless oik from Somerset says, press up twice, down twice, left, right, left, right, then button b, then a, whilst the game is paused. When the game is unpaused, you should have full weapons.

HYPER LODE-RUNNER

Game Boy

Once you've cleared 50 levels (is that all?), going back to any of the levels is possible by entering the password: QM-0388.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Game Boy

I couldn't actually get this to work but... Pressing Select, A and B on the configuration screen will prompt a question mark to appear at the far right of the level numbers. Choosing this will allow you to try any of the bonus games.

GUNSMOKE

NES

Press the button A four times and the controller twice left. This will give you a machine gun. Thanks to Peter Coiter for that little gem.

DAEDALIAN OPUS

Game Boy

Enter ZEAL for the password then choose any level you like to start. Cheers Robert Davidson of Accrington Stanley.

ARKANOID

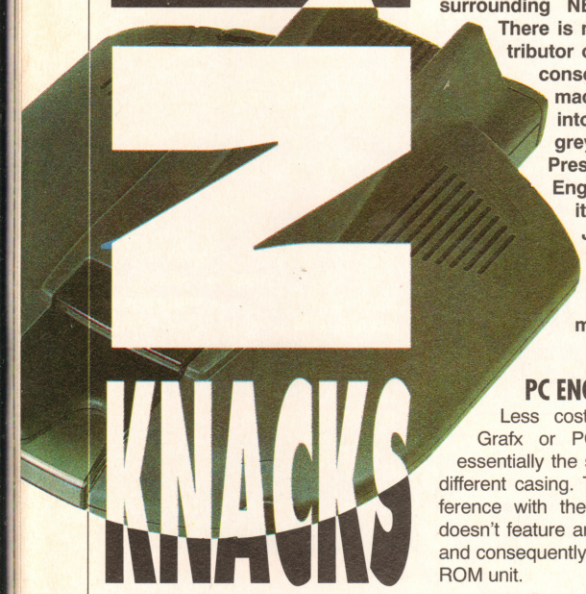
NES

To continue, says onother one of these Johnny Foreigner types, wait for the game to return to the title screen, then hit the Select button five times while holding down A and B

CALLING ALL NINTENDOPHILES!

Got a tip? Got a news snippet? Heard of a secret development? Get writing now to Narly Nintendo, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH. You want to win a fabulous new cart for your machine? You bet ya! So get writing.

NEC KNACKS



by Shintaro Kanaoya

Konnichi wa, teenage mutant dudes. Welcome to a spanking new column dedicated entirely to everyone's favourite Japanese console, the NEC PC Engine and its many offspring. For the hottest news, rumours, gossip and downright lies on NEC consoles, check this section out every month.

PC ENGINE
The original, real and only PC Engine which boasts a palette of 512 colours (256 can be onscreen at once), wonderful custom sound chip and all the necessary connections for attaching a CD-ROM unit.

First, I think it would be a good idea to clear up some confusion surrounding NEC's PC Engine. There is no official UK distributor of this fine games console, so most of the machines make it into the country via grey importers. Presently three PC Engine variants make it into Britain from Japan – however, there are numerous other Engine-compatible machines around:

PC ENGINE SHUTTLE

Less costly than the Core Grafx or PC Engine, but is essentially the same machine in a different casing. The only major difference with the Shuttle is that it doesn't feature an expansion socket and consequently can't accept a CD-ROM unit.

SUPER GRAFX

Essentially this is the PC Engine Plus or PC Engine II. It's got a 4096-colour palette and numerous other sprite and animation enhancements. The Super Grafx runs all Engine software. The reverse is not true.

TURBO GRAFX-16

Don't touch this machine. It's the American version of the PC Engine. Apart from its physical appearance, it is the same in almost all other aspects. Smart cards from the Turbo won't run in the Engine and vice versa as the two use different pin layouts. All software reaching the UK comes from Japan and is consequently PC Engine compatible and not Turbo Grafx compatible.

CORE GRAFX

You may be offered a Core Grafx rather than a PC Engine. Don't fret. Both machines are identical bar the colour scheme and name. NEC recently relaunched the Engine in Japan as the Core just to confuse everyone.

Darius Plus on the Engine. The shoot-'em-up to beat all shoot-'em-up.

PC ENGINE GT

The very latest in NEC's astonishing PC Engine compatible range. This is the hand held machine that will rival Sega's Game Gear and Atari's Lynx. See Hands Up! starting on page 72, or Big in Japan on page 14, for further details on this astonishing Super Grafx compatible machine.

Well that's it. No flash closing speech, no Japanese word. Just a word of advice: when wolves want to bite your head off, duck. See you in 43,200 minutes. Actually, I couldn't resist; sayonara, shitsurei, shimasu, ja or even mata. Take your pick. Abayo.

PC ENGINE TOP TEN IN JAPAN

1. Last Armagedon
2. Super Star Soldier
3. Legend of Valkyrie
4. Legend of Momotaroh; Turbo
5. Power League 3
6. Operation Wolf
7. Super Momotaroh; Dentetsu
8. Mah Jong School – Mild
9. Cyber Cross
10. Kikikaka

NIP TIPTOPIA

R-TYPE I & II

Both offer you the ability to increase credits. What you do is, on the title screen, hold down Select and hammer the I button (helps if your have autofire). However, this only works for up to 21 credits.

CHAN & CHAN

On level 1-4, when you reach the surface, go right. Above a hole there should be three blocks. Break the one on the very right. Fall down the hole and jump. You should reach a warp zone.

GALAGA '88

On the title screen press up and Run simultaneously. You are now in the reverse Galaga world where the capsules do different things. Red, which appears on levels 1 and 24, gives you triple fire. White on levels 11 and 23 let you fire three shots one after the other. Yellow on level 15 is a speed-up and green on level 19 gives you an extra life. Also, on the bonus screen, don't move, don't shoot, don't even breathe. You get the secret bonus of 10,000 points which is increased as you go to different dimensions.

SPACE HARRIER

After scoring at least 400,000 points and entering the high score screen type CNT for continue mode or MD to change craft control, difficulty, number of lives and even music.

POWERDRIFT

After failing to complete a course, keep your finger on button 1 then press Run twice – you will start on the level you died.

ATOMIC ROBO KIDD

Prior to the end-of-level nasty, shoot about two thirds up from the bottom of the screen. You should find a spot where a little kidney bean pops up. Do this a few times, collect them all and you will find that you now have every weapon there is.

CALLING ALL NEC-ROPHILES

Get tipping. This is your domain, so if you've got any hints or tips for the PC Engine or Super Grafx on getting the best out of a game, send it to NEC Nip Knacks, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH. The best game-busting ploy printed each month will win the author a software title of their choice. Hit paper with pen.

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MILLENNIUM

ATARI ATTACK

by Richard Monteiro

Got an Atari console? This is the place to be! Every month you'll find hard news, previews, gossip, reviews, tips and much more for your Atari console. Remember, it's not worth knowing if you don't read it here.

The hot topic for the past few months, without doubt, has been the much-rumoured new Lynx hand-held console. Fact: Atari have plans for a new low-cost Lynx. Fallacy: the new version – codenamed SOL, for son of Lynx – won't be an upright machine like the Game Boy as other ill-informed journals might have you imagine, but a more compact model of the existing machine.

But why a new Lynx? Several reasons:

■ The standard Lynx, lovely as it is, is reckoned to be a tad too big for true portability. The new machine will have at least 1.5 inches hacked off each end.

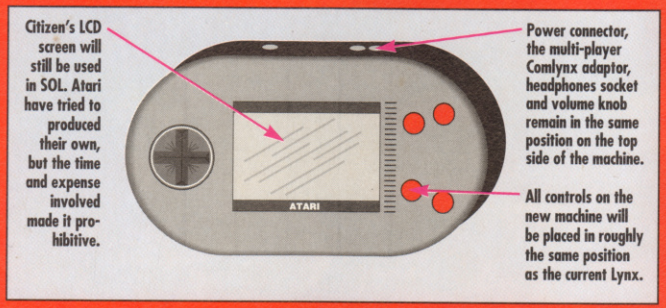
■ Battery life. Sore point, but one which must be conquered if the Lynx is to be the ultimate any time, any place machine. Current Lynx battery life is around three hours; Atari are hoping to significantly improve this.

■ The fantastic ingredients and finishing of the Lynx mean that the price isn't as competitive as it should be. Atari are hoping SOL will confound its critics by coming out at under £100.

SOL will look more circular (although will still have its top and bottom squared off) because of its more compact shape. To maintain compatibility with the current Lynx and games, Atari have had little option but to use a similar key layout to the original. Even the screen size remains the same.

Stereo sound output will be offered in SOL. At the moment the Lynx only has mono output – a crying shame considering the superb custom four-channel slice of silicon gracing the console.

Sources at Atari have indicated that pre-production SOLs might be around at Easter.



Atari tracks down customers

October 23rd saw the arrival of the Atari Whistle Stop Tour in Bristol's Temple Meads railway station; the first stopping point of a six-city tour. Six railway coaches kitted out with everything Atari – from the transputer-based ATW to the Lynx. The show was designed to take Atari to the people, rather than having the people go to an Atari Show. Bristol, Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, Glasgow and Birmingham were the stopping points of the tour.

Atari now have three consoles in the fold. The near-dead XE console and the '90s stars, the hand-held Lynx and 7800. Owners of the Atari 7800 console were able to see all the latest carts including two very exciting new numbers: *Impossible Mission* and *Turrican*.

On display were the six new Lynx games that are going to make exciting stocking fillers this festive season. *Paperboy* (reviewed on page 47), *Road Blasters*, *Klax* (also reviewed in full this issue on page 42), *Slimeworld* (RAZE reviewed and Raved in issue 1), *Zarlor Mercenary*, *Xenophobe*.

Oi! Cone on, dad, give us a go. You've been playing on the Lynx since you got here. Haven't you got the car to wash?

RUMOURS, LIES AND OTHER STORIES

■ *Zalor Mercenary* is the latest multi-player game coming for the Lynx. You're an experienced warship pilot helping to defend Zarlor's planets against hostile attack. In short, *Zarlor* is a fast and furious horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up. Should be out now at £29.99.

■ 7800 owners take heart, Atari are about to unleash a collection of classics for your machine by the time you read this. Reviewed this issue, for instance, are *Mat Mania* and *Planet Smashers*. And just around the corner are *Meltdown*, *Motopsycho*, *Ikari Warriors*, and *Basket Brawl*.

■ What do you think of a Lynx version of last month's rave ST game, *Nine Lives*? Atari reckon it'll be a winner and so do we. Looks like you could be seeing Bob and his favourite blonde bimbette, Claudette, on a 3.2-inch screen near you soon.

CHARLATAN'S CORNER

CHIP'S CHALLENGE

Lynx

Passcodes for the first ten levels of this puzzler plus codes for every tenth level thereafter? Yes, that will do nicely.

1. BDHP 4. YMCJ 7. FXQO
2. JXMJ 5. TQKB 8. KCRE
3. ECBQ 6. WNLP 9. VUWS
10. CNPE 60: ZYVI 110: XBAO
20: KGFP 70: GCCG 120: FLXP
30: BQZP 80: EVUG 130: XHIZ
40: YWFH 90: OLLM 140: SJUK
50: QBDH 100: QJXR

BLUE LIGHTNING

Lynx

When hit by an enemy missile or plane, press and hold the up direction on the joypad while pressing button A. This will make you reappear at the place you died rather than forcing you to start at the beginning of the level. Finally, codes to get to all the levels in this excellent shoot-'em-up:

1. AAAA 4. BELL 7. HAND
2. PLAN 5. NINE 8. FLEA
3. ALFA 6. LOCK 9. LIFE

GATES OF ZENDOCON

Lynx

The end-of-game ugly can be disposed of. Honest. Keep your shield going and continually shoot him near his eyes. It takes time, but can be done. Also, ensure you don't get hit by his claws.

CALLING ALL ATARIPHILES

This is your corner. It will only survive with your help. So, if you've some hot tip on getting the best out of a game for any Atari console, send it to Atari Attack, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH. The best game-busting ploy printed each month will win the author a software title of their choice. Get scribbling!

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COMMODORE CORRAL

by Les Ellis

If you find a Commodore C64GS in your stocking this Christmas, you'll be glad you got RAZE – the only mag with a dedicated Commodore console column. Everyone's developing for the C64GS, and you'll read about it first here.

A quick rundown of what we're talking about before I get into the nitty-gritty. The C64GS retails at £99 and comes with four games on one cartridge. For your 99 coins you get the old C64 minus keyboard in a new box and the games *Klax, Fiendish Freddy's Big Top 'O Fun, Flimbo's Quest* and the golden oldie *International Soccer* on a single cartridge.

Present C64 owners need not upgrade, the carts will plug straight into the back of their machine through that hole you never thought you'd use. Due to the complete compatibility, C64GS owners should theoretically have access to a plethora of software carts already. Not so. The old carts are practically impossible to get hold of now, but don't fret because software houses are starting to realise the opportunities of mass software sales without piracy problems.

Here's a quick round-up of the latest software that should be on the shelves by Christmas:

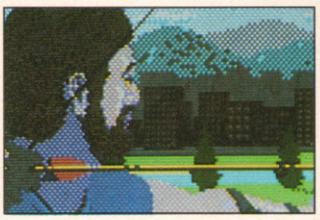
■ That bad boy Michael Jackson makes an appearance on yet another console with the Sega arcade conversion of *Moonwalker* based on Mikie's fantasy movie. At £24.99, it's quite a bit more than the original C64 version, but should be worth it.

■ Software supremos, Ocean, are giving the console their undoubted support. They've four carts planned for release before Christmas: *Shadow of the Beast, Pang, Chase HQ II* and *RoboCop II*. Not a bad line-up, eh? Readers of last issue's *Navy SEALs* review will already know of that conversion for February next year. All Ocean C64GS carts are priced £19.99.

■ Start looking out for the release of some classics from Epyx just after Christmas. Yes, US Gold are contemplating whether to slap the *Games* series in a cartridge. Of course they should, what's the delay? Get writing to them now, demanding *California Games, Summer Games* and *Winter Games*. If these games weren't made for the console then I don't know what was!

CALLING ALL C64GS OWNERS!

With the advent of a Commodore console, it means Commodore owners will have to get used to those strange controller cheats. If you find any out, send them to Commodore Corral, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH. The best tip each month gets the hottest new cart.

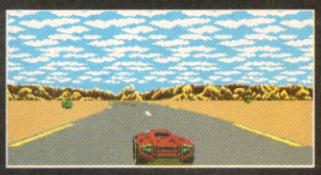


The old ones are still the best. And now they load a bit quicker on the C64GS!

AMSTRADOPOLIS

by David Goliath

The Amstrad Effect is happening again. With the release of the GX4000, Britain's sole console producer could be cleaning up this Christmas. Keep an eye on the surprise success of the year by checking in at Amstradopolis every month



Fire and Forget II starts a massive snowball of Titus GX4000 games to be released before Christmas

You can't have failed to have seen the GX4000. With Amstrad's marketing, the superbly designed console could sell just as many units this Christmas as all the other console manufacturers put together. Amstrad seem to have got it just right. Although the hardware is an improvement over the old CPC computers, the workings are still familiar to developers. Also, Amstrad have a strict pricing structure to avoid price-cutting wars, and companies won't have to bother with the production of the game carts, Amstrad will do it for them. Cor, what a great company Amstrad are...

Software has already started to trickle in for the console. Epyx are producing *World of Sport*, a compilation of the best sports games from their famous *Games* series.

After the favourably review in RAZE last issue, there's a GX4000 version of the *Navy SEALs* film tie-in. As in *Burnin' Rubber* (chucked in free with the machine), Ocean have done a great job with the graphics. There's loads of colour, and even though the GX's definition is a bit chunky, the characters are really well animated. The bad news, however, is that you'll have to wait until February for the game because the release of the film has been delayed. Still, at £24.99, it represents good value for money when compared against the likes of the Sega Master System.

Also around in time for inclusion in Christmas stockings will be *Fire and Forget II*. The computer versions weren't too hot, but if the Master System is anything to go by, Titus could have a console winner on their hands. Also from Titus, there's *Crazy Cars II*, the sequel to the immensely success car pursuit game.

More Titus goodies are expected in the form of the beat-'em-up *Wild Streets* and a *Dick Tracy* film tie-in with Disney.

Just in case you missed it elsewhere in this issue, *Gazza II* is kicking off the console Christmas with a super *Kick Off* challenger. Now get your eyes checked because the footballing hero is on the front cover – how could you miss him!

AMSTRAD ACTION

Sussed a shoot-'em-up? Completed a collect-'em-up? Get scribbling those GX4000 hints and tips to *Amstradopolis, Raze, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH.* The best tip each month gains the author a hot new cartridge.

Even Disney will be on the GX4000 console with news of Dick Tracy for Christmas time. Take that, Sega!

Whatever next, a Matsui console?

RAZE CHRISTMAS 1990

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RATINGS

Every format reviewed has its own graphics, sound, playability and overall rating. The graphics score takes into account sprite definition, animation, background detail and technical merit. The sound rating takes into account loading music, in-game effects and background music. The playability mark considers how the game performs from the moment you pick up the stick until you drop from exhaustion. Finally, the overall rating takes into account audio visuals, playability, presentation, documentation and packaging.

GAME PUBLISHERS

After the game heading you'll find the game publisher followed by the game type. In cases where a game is released across numerous formats from various software publishers, the publisher slot will simply say 'various'; you'll be able to find the producer for individual formats in the main review text.

AVAILABILITY

You'll notice the price and release date below the percentage rating for each format. If the game is on the shelves then the release date spot will say 'out now' otherwise it will have the date the game is expected to hit the streets. If a game is available only on import , then 'import' will be written in the release date spot.

IMPORT REVIEWS

At the end of the review section you'll find a few pages on console import reviews. These are generally short reviews and can almost be treated as previews as the games mentioned aren't widely available in the UK. When the games are officially released in the UK, these games will be reviewed in full. Import games can only be obtained from specialist grey importers, all of which are mentioned on the relevant review pages.

PREVIEWS

Games are generally released across various formats – however, only rarely are they all ready simultaneously. The games that are available at the time of writing will have percentage ratings. Everything else will be bundled in the preview box with, where possible, remarks on what the complete game is expected to look and sound like.

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RAVE

SPEEDBALL II

MIRRORSOFT ■ FUTURE SPORT

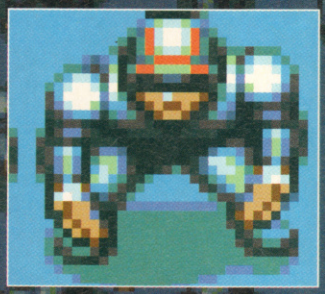
Speedball was hailed as the seminal future sports game. Julian Boardman pulls on his Bitmap Shades to see if the sequel is as revolutionary.

To say that the sequel, programmed by Rob Trevellyan, is an improvement on the original would be a slight understatement. It has taken the excellent foundation that was *Speedball*, now two years old, and built into it a complex managerial system, the choice of five different game types and improved the playability.

Controls remain the same as the original version. The fire button performing four functions in eight directions, throwing the ball when in possession, tackling when not, sliding when the ball is on the ground, and catching it when it is in the air. The best control change that has been made is that the goalie is now controlled on his own whenever you see him, instead of simultaneously with a defender. This means there is now no longer the chance for the opposition to dummy your defender and streak past a misplaced goalie. Also, the goalie can come out about a screen's distance and catch, throw and tackle in the same way as any of the other players, allowing much more freedom and playability.

There are five different types of game: Practice, which is just you and the ball; Instant, which pits you against one of the 15 other computer controlled teams, each with its own characteristics; Exhibition, where you choose which of the other 15 teams to play against; League, where you work your way up the two-division, 16-team league; and Cup, which is basically your standard knockout tournament. The very impressive management system is used on the League and Cup games. There is also an option for a two-player game.

The blue team that you control in the one-player game are called Brutal Deluxe, and consist of 12 players, nine regulars and three subs, all of which can have their positions within the team exchanged. Each player has eight attributes: speed, defensive ability, throwing power, general power,



intelligence, attacking ability, stamina and aggression, which is denoted by a number from 100 to 250.

The team is split into four tactical sections: Attack, Midfield, Defence, and Goal, each of which can have its attributes altered separately just like each player.

It is also possible to buy and sell players to strengthen your team further, but only from what players are available at the time. All of this can be done from the two management screens, the Gym and Transfer screen. Before these adjustments are made to your team, the statistics of the team you are about to face are displayed so the correct tactics can be chosen.

When the statistics are being beefed up, it is possible to change the whole team, one group or an individual as you see fit, with either an across-the-board increase for all the stats you can afford, or paying close attention to

Mid-match action in *Speedball II*. Bigger pitch, more pick-ups, more animation...

GRAPHICS **94%**
✓ Remarkable title screens and post match tableaus.
✓ First Bitmap game to use 32 colours onscreen.

SOUND **94%**
✓ Blistering soundtrack. (Watch out for the dance remix!)
✓ Fully interactive crowd response on home and away games.

PLAYABILITY **94%**
✓ Fast moving gameplay with excess amounts of violence.
✓ Ease of use on the management section.

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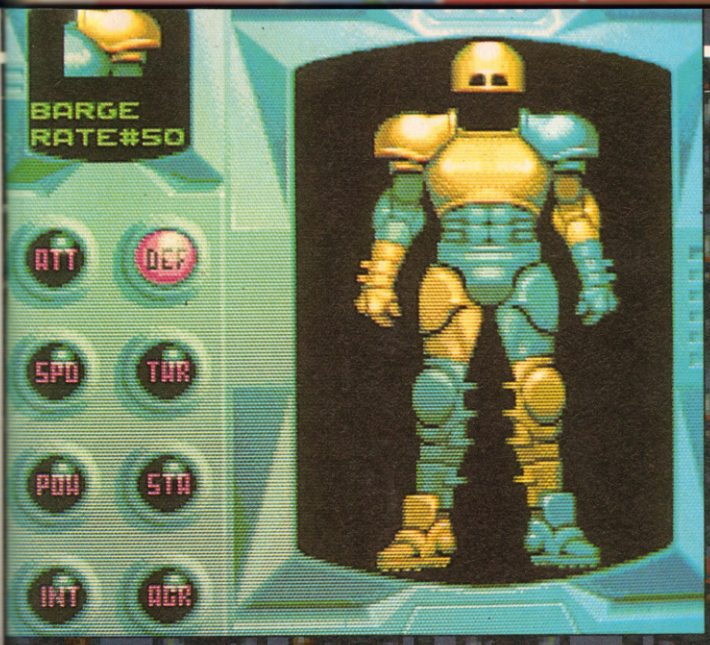
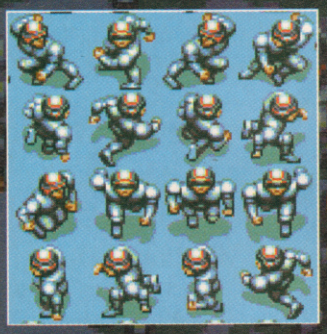
ATARI ST
93%

THE DEF GUIDE TO SPEEDBALL

Speedball n. 1. Slang. a mixture of heroin with amphetamine or cocaine. 2. Austr. a meat rissole with laxative properties, eaten esp. by shearers. (Courtesy of Collins English Dictionary).



Brutal Luther takes to the gym in an effort to increase his stamina and defensive skills.



individual stats. To prevent you getting carried away, one attribute cannot be increased beyond 20 units above the average. Therefore, it is impossible to raise, say, aggression at the expense of the other seven. The beauty of it is that someone who wants to play the game more on the action side can go in and improve the team generally in a few seconds. Conversely, someone who wants to focus more on the management can take time over allocation of funds to the weakest and most productive areas, looking at each player individually, giving themselves far more depth.

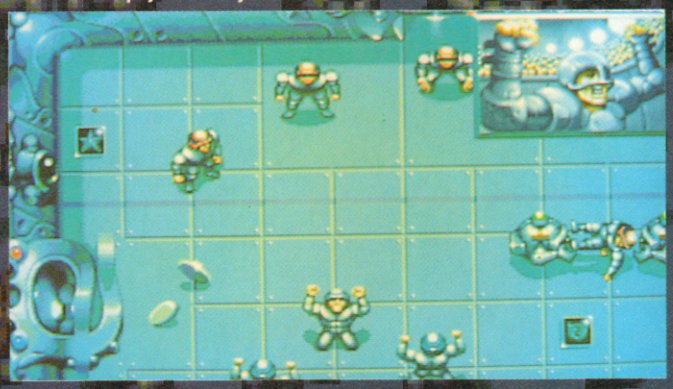
The pitch itself is now 100% bigger with far more features than in the original (there are 20 different pick-ups!), and the scoring system has changed. Ten points are scored for a goal, five for having one of the opponent's stretchered off, two for hitting a Bounce Dome and two for hitting and illuminating one of the stars on the edge wall of the pitch (each time five are lit another ten bonus points are registered).

There is also a new innovation called the Double Playfield. Rolling the ball up the ramp will increase all subsequent scores by 50%, do it twice and you get 100%, but if the opposition roll in the ball twice your advantaged is wiped out. God help you if they roll the ball up there two more times!

The warp gates are still there (four of them!) for the ball to be thrown through to come out the other side, but the best addition is the Electrobounce. Bounce the ball on any one of these four units and as long as it keeps moving it will knock over any player it touches, even the goalkeeper. But by the time *Speedball II* hits the streets it may well be changed to allow it to knock over only one player as initial playtesting has shown that this feature tends to get over-used.

What the Bitmaps have here is a remarkably playable and even more violent future sports game, with extra points on the pitch and the very useable manager section that give it a variety and an element of strategy that *Speedball* lacked. Plus the fact that no expense has been spared on the sound or the graphics. Some rich soul would have to bribe me hideous amounts of money not to like this game, any offers Hewson...?

Henry Lewis could play billiards with his nose instead of a cue



GOAL! GOAL! GOAL!

The Brutal Deluxe await their future as you decide what management skills are required to get this bunch of motley characters to the finals.

GRAPHICS **92%**
✓ Just 16 colours but it still looks good.
✓ Wide variety of pitch designs.

SOUND **94%**
✓ Crunching in-game effects to make you wince.
✓ They can often help to let you know what is going on in a confusing moment.

PLAYABILITY **94%**
✓ Changing ends means that any advantage is shared.
✓ Plenty of scope for real depth in managing.

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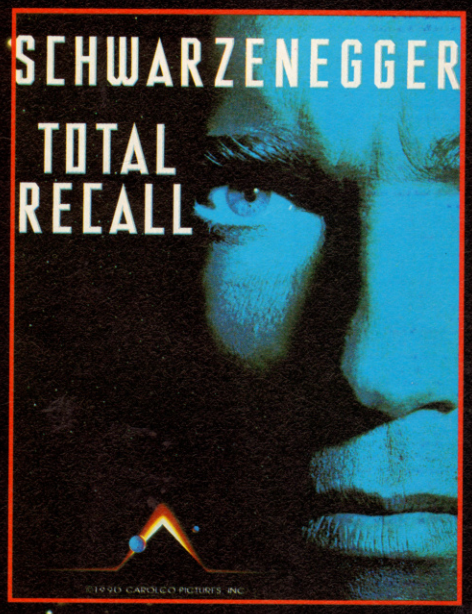
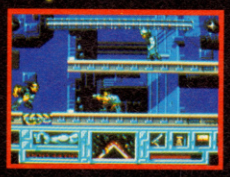
AMIGA
94%

Flies generally prefer to breed in the centre of the room.

POWER





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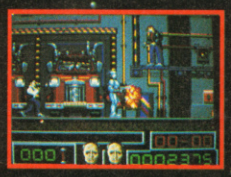
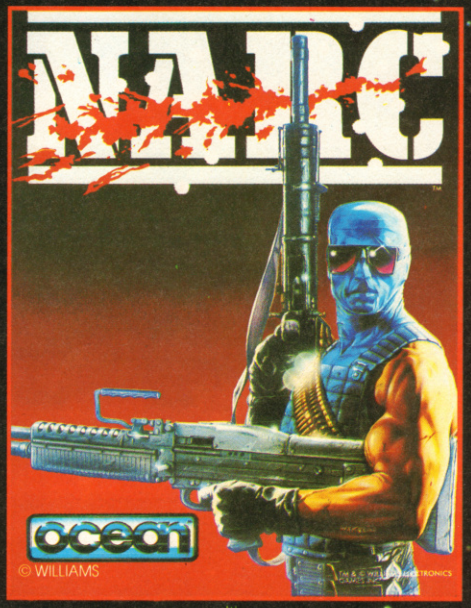


MORE THAN A GAME - ROBOCOP 2 IS THE PRIME DIRECTIVE.

NARC The arcade action thriller with the BIG finish. Infiltrate the criminal underworld - your mission is to seek out and destroy the king pin of the MR BIG CORPORATION - if you get that far.

You'll have to outwit his enormous army of body guards... gangs of charisma bypass patients in trench coats, the bullet brain with the build of a rhinoceros and the breath of a dung beetle, packs of vicious canine yappies, the psychotic clown with an evil sense of humour - you'll die, but not laughing!

Then there's the gas guzzling cadillac jock - a cool specimen, elbow hanging on the door rail, a serious looking piece in his hand and ready to blow you away as he rolls down main street leaving you coughing lead.



It's not all bad!... You've got a chopper to back you up, a mean, shiny street machine, some heavy metal hardware and some pretty neat moves. And what about the king pin... did I say he was Mr. Big? No, he's

MR BIG!

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AMSTRAD . COMMODORE . SPECTRUM
ATARI ST . CBM AMIGA

RAVE

M1 TANK PLATOON

MICROPROSE ■ STRATEGY SIMULATION

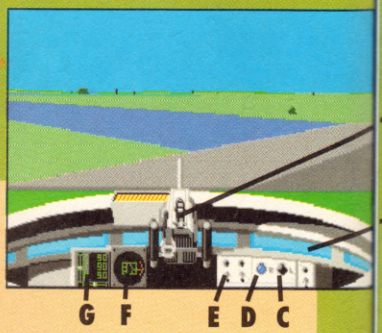
Being our own version of "Tank" from the Walkers crisps advert, Julian Boardman seemed the obvious choice for the next assignment

Lucky IBM PC owners have had MicroProse's *M1 Tank Platoon* for ages, it is only now that MicroProse have managed to squeezed this immense battle simulation into the restrictive memory of the basic 512K 16-bit machine.

One thing hasn't changed though, the manual. I don't know about you but I always find huge manuals extremely daunting, and the tome for *M1 Tank Platoon* is certainly no exception. With 200 pages to contend with I felt yet again that old Jools had drawn the short straw. But I was to be pleasantly surprised; *M1 Tank* is enjoyably simple to get into and all too elementary to become immersed in.

You take the role of the commander of a US army tank platoon. Each tank is fully crewed by individual crew members, as the commander you may give orders to the entire platoon or single tanks, and if you so desire you may take over the role of any crewman, but they will function independently.

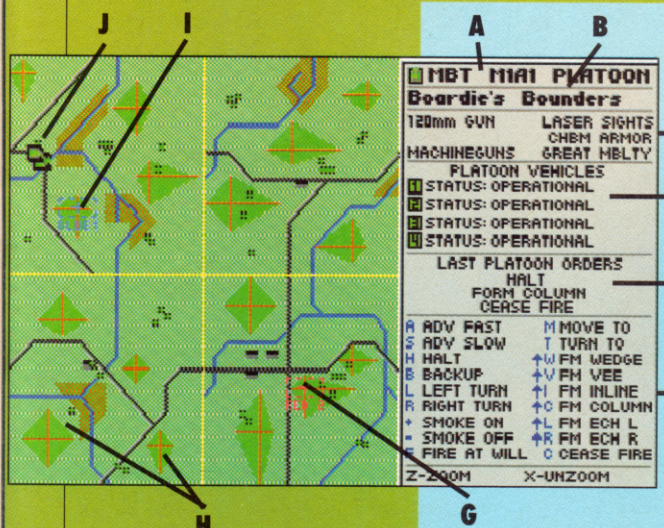
Things begin with two training missions – the manual providing a walk through guide of each – that go over the different commands and view-



TC (TURRET CUPOLA) OPEN

From here a full 360-degree view can be achieved using binoculars and night sights. A heavy machine gun can be used against nearby targets.

A/ M2HB .50 calibre heavy machine gun
B/ Vision blocks – for use when hatch is closed
C/ Laser warning light – lights when tank is being targeted by an enemy laser sight
D/ Round loaded light – keeps you informed of current tank status
E/ Smoke grenade launcher controls
F/ Facing diagram – represents bearing of hull and turret
G/ Facing digital readout – shows exact facing bearing of three main positions: commander, turret and hull



MAPBOARD

From here orders can be given to platoons or individual vehicles, but specific positions cannot be controlled, the servicemen will do their job. The grey area on the right can display the details for any of the vehicles you command, including support vehicles, and orders are given to the unit that is displayed here. Also, the general status of enemy equipment is accessible. Your support may well include scout choppers and artillery, but will vary according to the mission.

A/ General description and map symbol of current subject
B/ Name of platoon
C/ Equipment details
D/ Equipment status
E/ Details of orders given – this area may also show damage of a specific piece of selected equipment
F/ Key to orders – the mouse can be used to select these orders
G/ Enemy stronghold
H/ Hills
I/ Your stronghold
J/ Your tanks – enemy tanks are displayed in red, but only when they have been observed.

GRAPHICS 66%
✓ The driver, gunner, etc have screens that contain a large amount of info.
✗ The mapboard doesn't have quite the detail of the Amiga.

SOUND 62%
✓ Slightly better sound effects on the ST(!).
✗ A rather dire intro tune.

PLAYABILITY 91%
✓ No need to access the disk every time a screen is changed.
✗ Fairly slow movement of the screen across the scenery.

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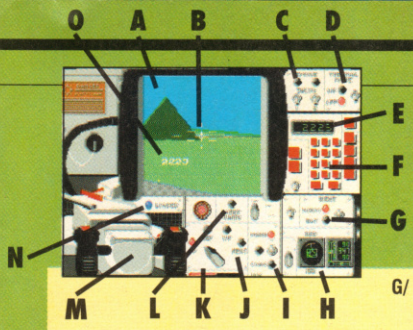
ATARI ST
90%

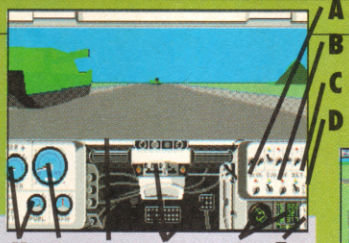
I once ate 3,640 packs of Walkers crisps in a day.



GUNNER'S POSITION

It is from here that you take over the gunner's controls.

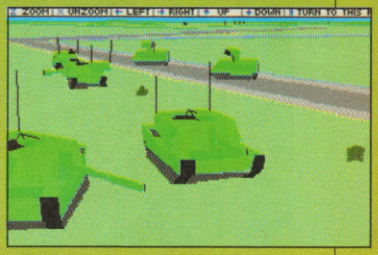
A/ Area viewed through Gunner's Primary Sight
B/ Stadia lines
C/ Smoke grenade launcher controls
D/ Night vision controls – uses thermal imaging to give a picture in the GPS
E/ Ballistic computer readout – shows the range the computer is locked on to, usually the most recent reading from the laser range-finder. The computer will automatically aim for this distance when the gun is fired
F/ Ballistic computer
G/ Normal Battlesight toggle – in battlesight mode the computer is disabled and the gun will fire without any vertical elevation. This is only useful in a reasonably close quarters situation as without elevation, gravity soon takes over the trajectory of the missile
H/ Facing readouts
I/ Main Coax toggle – switches between the main gun and the co-axial machine gun
J/ Ammunition toggle switch – chooses between high-explosives which are good against troops, or anti-tank; the tank will usually carry 20 of each
K/ Magnify vision lever
L/ Laser warning light
M/ Handgrips of gunner's controls
N/ Round loaded light
O/ Laser range-finder – this is fed straight into the ballistic computer



DRIVER'S POSITION

From here the driver's controls can be taken over, his vision is through a periscope and is nearest to the ground of the other positions.

A/ Exhaust smoke generator – used for masking the rear of the tank
B/ Night periscope switch
C/ Round loaded light
D/ Engine on/off light
E/ Laser warning light
F/ Facing readouts
G/ Control pedals
H/ Gear indicator
I/ Driver's grips
J/ Speedometer
K/ Engine dials and warning lights



This is the platoon of M1s, in the background are two M901 anti-tank missile carriers just waiting to blast those Commies, er, Iraquis.

points available to you, and even begin to describe some basic tactics.

After the two training missions it is onto the real thing, a battle that can be anything from a "Blitzkrieg" straight in, straight out mission, to a full campaign. Each of these battles can be against one of four levels of opponent – which are still Russian, but I imagine events rather overtook the programmers – from very green to elite guards, the level of their equipment reflected in their skill. A briefing is given after the mission is chosen, showing your objectives and armed support on the map, then the crew and weapons of the four tanks can be adjusted to suit the needs of the mission. Once complete, the action begins and it soon becomes a case of on-the-job training.

This is another of MicroProse's excellent simulations, which very cleverly allows for any degree of depth from the player. A novice can go in and have a good time on a basic level, while a more advanced player can make use of the wealth of background info in the manual, on tactics, technology and doctrine, to have a highly involved and enveloping strategy simulation. The depth of accuracy is stunning; it is possible to be retired after a certain number of missions just like the American army, and the technical accuracy is remarkable. But it is the ease of use and access that impressed me, the game is keyboard and icon-driven with each function implemented by a keystroke or a click, which is essential as speed of action and reaction are imperative.

This really is amazingly good, give it a try.

GRAPHICS **66%**
✗ The vector graphics of the tanks and other vehicles in battles lack detail.
✓ Clear and precise information on all of the screens, especially the mapboard.

SOUND **61%**
✓ Easily recognizable and informative sound effects.
✓ Fortunately they don't intrude and overpower the game

PLAYABILITY **93%**
✓ Easy to pick up without spending hours buried in a manual.
✓ So much depth allows months of complex gameplay.

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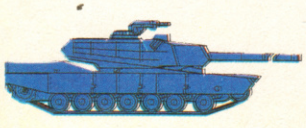
AMIGA
91%

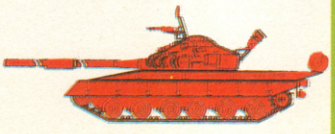
USA
M1A1 Main Battle Tank

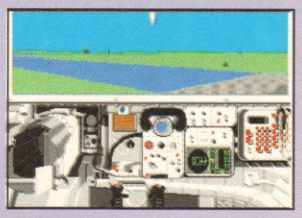
Weight: 63 tons
Crew: 4 – commander, gunner, driver, loader
Main gun: 120mm
Ammo types: APFSDS, HEAT
Armour: Chobham/depleted uranium
Engine: 1500hp gas turbine
Max speed: 67kph (42mph)

USSR
T-80 Main Battle Tank

Weight: 46 tons
Crew: 3 – commander, gunner, driver
Main gun: 125mm
Ammo types: HVAPFSDS, HEAT, HE
Armour: composite steel and reactive plating
Engine: 900hp gas turbine
Max speed: 70kph (44mph)



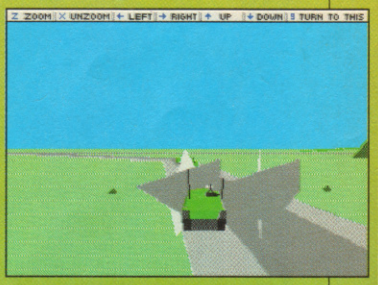




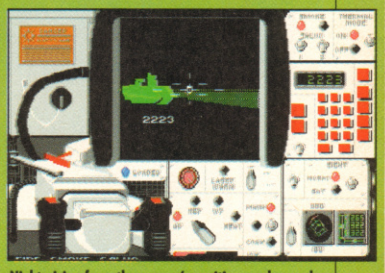
TC BUTTONED

This is the turret position with the hatch closed. The functions available here are limited.

A/ These controls are the gunner's
B/ Breech of the main gun
C/ Barrel of the heavy machine gun



This is the outside tank view. The view can be rotated and the tank can be ordered to turn to be facing the view. The grey blob is a smoke salvo.



Night vision from the gunner's position can be used to see through the smoke.

What's so clever about that, Jools?

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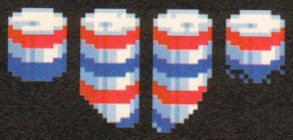

IRONMAN STUART'S SUPER OFF ROAD RACER

VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC ■ ARCADE ACTION

After being soundly thrashed by everyone at Super Sprint, Julian Boardman took heart in being the only person to have played Graftgold's latest

Watching the real-life version of this game is outrageously frightening. All these souped up pick-ups, with enough suspension to put the Severn Bridge to shame, racing over mounds of earth and spending far more time in the air than they ever do on the ground. With tyres wider than the average Mini they areer around the tracks seeming to barely hang onto the course. Graftgold's conversion manages to capture the spirit of the live action driving freak-scenes they have on American TV and is more than faithful to the arcade original that I spent far too much money on.

For those of you unfortunate enough to have missed this cornucopia (!) of fun I shall explain. Up to three players competed against Ironman's grey pick-up using the steering wheels on the cabinet to navigate the undulating and pitted courses for four laps of each. Each competitor that beat Ironman went through to the next race after spending the copious amounts money that you either collected during, or won after, the race.

This money could be spent on nitros for that boost of power to send you flying off the track; tyres, for better grip when you did stay in contact with the floor; acceleration; higher top speed; tighter turning circle and so on. Every one I knew just bought hundreds of nitros so they could dump on everyone else. The real fun came as you hurtled towards a corner after punching out five nitros and span the steering wheel like a maniac so you could just make it around and stay in a very precarious first place.

Unfortunately the home versions haven't got a steering wheel. Still, mustn't grumble, after all neither has my bike.

So how did the lads at Graftgold overcome the problem? On the joystick control, pushing forward will make you accelerate, left and right will surprisingly do just that. This is not entirely ideal as it is all too easy to slip a little and lose power while turning, but because of the need to activate two functions, pressing fire hits the nitros, there is really no alternative.

Keyboard control, open to only one player at a time, is a little easier as each function is on a separate key. Mouse control is obviously less accurate when turning as you would expect, so anticipate a fight when it comes to choosing the controls for the three-player game.

The battle with Ironman on the numerous and progressively difficult tracks should not be considered until a modicum of prowess is achieved. He may be easy to beat at the beginning, but he soon catches up and tunes his performance according to yours.

What you eager young suicide pilots out there must remember, as players of the arcade original will know, is that there is a damn good game just waiting to get out. When the minor niggles over the control set-up can be overcome, and believe me they will, the lack of *Super Sprint* on the Amiga will be finally alleviated.

IRONMAN BOARDMAN'S TIPS

★ Initially stock up on nitros when cash is short. Use money from the big wins to really soup up your car.

★ Don't go mad with the nitros, use them on jumps or when that extra lead may make all the difference.

★ Make sure your steering is accurate, a slight bump and a delay could send you backwards into a hopeless fourth place.

GRAPHICS **66%**
✓ Exact reproductions of those in the arcade machine.
✗ A variety of vehicles would have been a nice addition.

SOUND **71%**
✓ Jolly tunes that you either love or hate.
✗ Almost non-existent sound effects.

PLAYABILITY **62%**
✓ Recreates the head-to-head atmosphere of the original.
✗ Controls are a little difficult to pick up at first.

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AMIGA 84%

Right: gee, what a pair of trophies. The middle screen shows the items that can be bought from the Speed Shop. Below right: the first track presents little problem, but is riddled with hills and holes just waiting to catch out the unsuspecting driver.

US GOLD ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

Les Ellis strides into the office and stumbles over USG's latest Capcom conversion

The original *Strider*, which appeared over a year ago on computer and the Mega Drive, was well-received by all who played it. Coincidentally the game is rereleased on the Amiga and Atari ST this month in the *Platinum* compilation. Check out the review in Budget Blitz on page 80.

Jumping 100 years into the future the fray with great aplomb.

There are five levels to travel through, each being packed with enough aliens to keep even the most hardened super hero busy for a while. Level one is the forest where your spaceship has landed, inhabited by a strange menagerie of monsters and mutants.

From level one you enter two towers which together form the planet's outer defence system. This is where your chain-climbing ability comes into its own. Watch out for the power points which discharge electricity.

Levels three takes you deep into underground caverns, riddled with rats and roaches. The penultimate stage takes place at the generating station where you heard the world leader was last seen. The grounds of the station are represented by platforms and chains which must be climbed if you are to rescue the leading lady.

But you're too late. The kidnappers have heard of your plans and moved the gal to a spacecraft orbiting the planet – ho hum, this hero business isn't all it's cracked up to be. This woman had better be worth the trouble.

Strider is back, this time on a rescue mission for a female world leader.

Need a lift? Jump on the elevator to reach the upper regions of the level.

Strider II takes place in the far off world of Magenta. The female world leader has been kidnapped and taken to a secret location. It's a good job the leader's a woman because any self-respecting male computer owner wouldn't go after some bloke with a birth mark on his head.

Strider stills has all the familiar athletic feats from the original – including those spinning jumps – plus a new ability to climb ropes and chains. Still armed with a sword and gyro gun, the strapping lad enters

Strider leaps with joy at the thought of a sequel.

The Amiga version is waiting in the wings and should support improved sound with similar graphics. Got a GX4000? You'll be getting a version too. Details of content and availability still not available.

PREVIEW

GRAPHICS **80%**

✓ Detailed backdrops make it a pleasure to explore your surroundings.

✓ The palette is put to good use with a lovely range of oranges and browns.

SOUND **81%**

✓ Atmospheric music playing on the title screen.

✓ Good slicing effects for the gyro gun.

PLAYABILITY **80%**

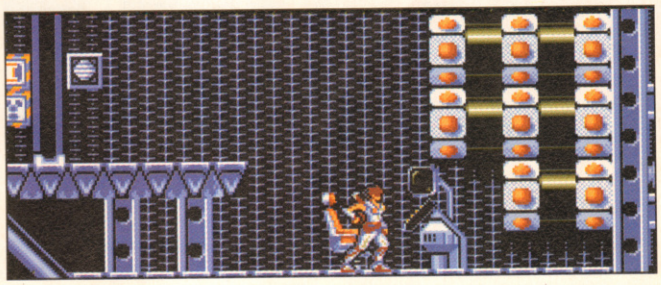
✓ The levels are large enough to keep you going for a long time.

✓ There's always the urge to get just a little bit further into the game.

£24.99 ▼ OUT NOW

ATARI ST

87%

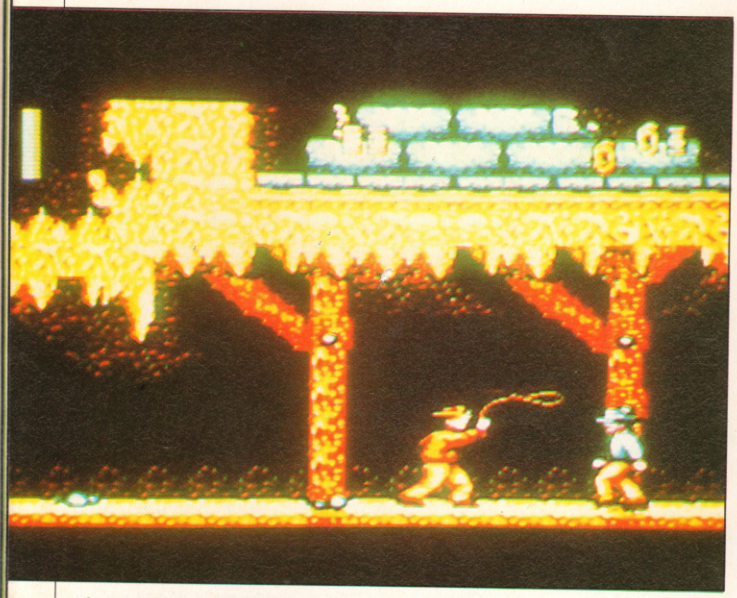


INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US GOLD ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

With his hat, whip and kinky boots(?), Julian Boardman follows in the illustrious footsteps of history's most famous adventurer

Despite being nearly 50 years old, Harrison Ford just keeps on banging away at defeating the Nazi's as Steven Spielberg lives out his Jewish revenge fantasies. This one, being the third in the series, sees Indy trying to find the Holy Grail before the Nazi's get to it. All he has to help him are his father's sketchy notes, jotted down on a pad that was posted to him from his father in Italy. From this he must overcome untold mysteries and dangers to find what is possibly the most sacred and most powerful item in the Christian world.



Whip 'em, Indy! (Do not try this at home.)

The game itself is based around various scenarios from the box-office hit of late 1989, and as such is a direct conversion of US Gold's best-selling game which also appeared at that time.

The first scenario sees Indy, the boy scout (played in the film by River Phoenix), searching a network of caverns, caves and chasms to reach the Cross of Coronado. The ancient artefact has been stolen by treasure looters, who aim to use it for their own gain. Little Indy must first find the whip, and then fight his way past thugs and put the cross in a museum where it belongs.

Having collected the cross, Indy has to escape along a circus train only to discover his phobia of snakes as he falls into a case of the scaly creatures. Unfortunately, Indy loses out to his pursuers this time, but that's the way of the film, so it's on to level two. (People who've seen the film will know that Indy gets the Cross of Coronado back many years later.)

And so to Castle Brunwald, to track down the other half of the shield of the Knights Templar, which gives clues as to the whereabouts of the Grail and news of where his father is held – except he doesn't chase after old Sean Connery because he has no part in the game.

Then Indy finds himself on a zeppelin, dodging Nazis, rats and lightning as he searches for the escape plane that will help him reach the Holy Grail.

Indy tries to lasso himself a boyfriend. Things can get lonely for an adventurer...

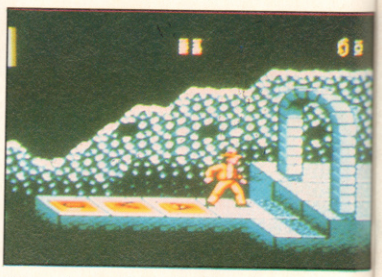
GRAPHICS	91%
✓ Nice digitised title screen and in-game graphics.	
✓ Good use of colour and tremendous animation.	
SOUND	73%
✗ Good title tune that gets irritating very quickly.	
✓ In-game sound effects are jolly and enhace gameplay.	
PLAYABILITY	83%
✗ Loses it's long term appeal because tasks are so repetitive.	

£29.99 ▼ OUT 12/90

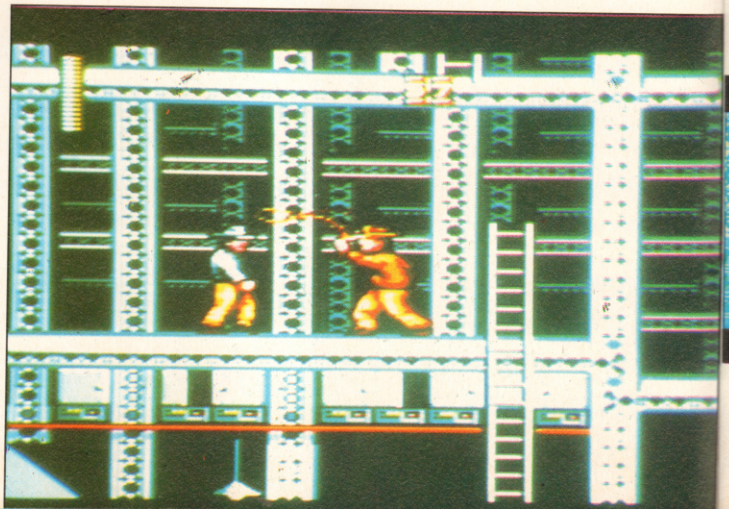
MASTER SYSTEM

89%

But it's not over yet. Even though our Indy knows where the Grail is, it's not that easy getting to it. There are disappearing tiles, invisible bridges and the plethora of Grail-like cups to confuse and confront the greatest adventurer of our time.



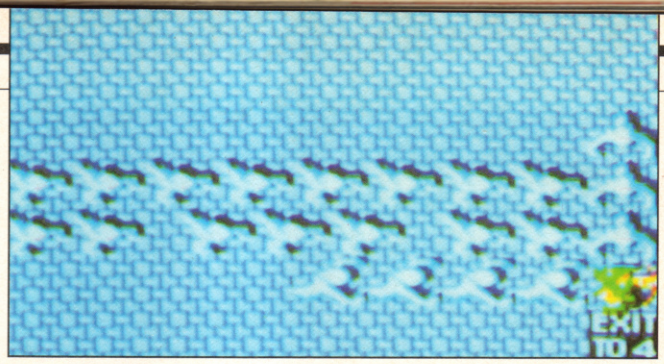
After passing over the puzzling tiles, Indy encounters the final conflict in the caves of a mountain.



GAUNTLET

US GOLD ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

Julian Boardman heads for the caverns in search of rats, ghouls and Les Ellis



Chaaaaaaaaarge!

You get to choose a player from four characters: Thor, a warrior; Merlin, a motor mechanic (just kidding, he's a wizard); Thyra, the requisite amazon; and Quester, a dwarf.

All have their own peculiar talent to bring to the game, usually a variation of brains or brawn. The limited input of the Sega only allows the control of two characters at once – however, that's better than only one.

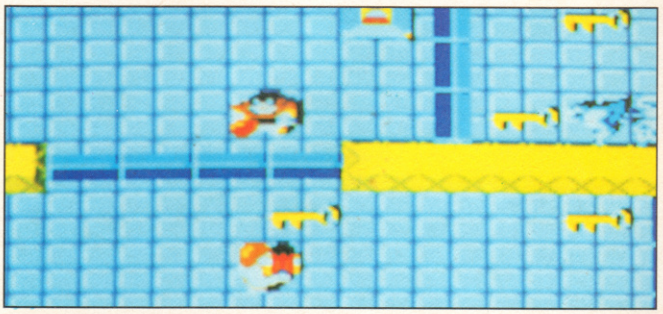
The chosen characters fight their way through dungeon after dungeon, collecting keys and potions, using their weapons to destroy all in their way.

The lucky travellers will also manage to collect huge amounts of treasure on their quest to conquer the Dungeons of Darkness, but only if their health lasts long enough to allow them to do so. Every time they get a hit from one of the huge hordes of ghosts, devils and skeletons, the large health quotient drops a few points, until eventually Dr Death makes a visit.

The action can be most frenetic at times, especially with the millions of ghosts on each level. Despite the lack of any great changes between levels, *Gauntlet* is mysteriously addictive. There's a compulsive lure to discover what lurks on the next level, and the one after that, and the one...

The conversion's faithful to the coin-op – it's fast, furious and immensely playable.

Pick up every key, as it's very embarrassing getting to the last door and finding you haven't got a key to open it.



GRAPHICS **78%**
✗ Sprites and background colours are, like the coin-op, uninspiring.
✓ The scrolling is simply stunning; very smooth and expertly done.

SOUND **68%**
✗ Da, dada, dada, da, da... Da dada, dada, da, da...
✗ Sound effects are ample, but none are sampled.

PLAYABILITY **95%**
✓ Gameplay is fast, furious and very involving.
✓ *Gauntlet* will hold your attention longer than is naturally healthy.

£29.99 ▼ OUT 10/90

MASTER SYSTEM 64%

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION

US GOLD ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

Elvin Atombender has returned to take over the Master System. Julian Boardman wonders whether he should bother stopping him

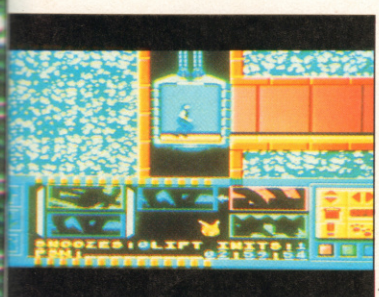
Along comes another creaking dinosaur that even saw the light of day on the Acorn Electron. In fact, the sequel was recently rereleased at a budget price on the Amiga and Atari ST. If you've never heard of Atombender and his evil jiggery-pokery then where have you been for the last five years. But don't worry, the big guy's back, as bad as ever and welcoming you one more time to "stay a while, stay forever!" (cue evil cackle).

As is a meglomaniac's lot in life, Elvin Atombender wants to destroy the world. As agent 4125 it is your task to somersault through Elvin's tower complex in search of pieces of a password puzzle which will crack Elvin's mainframe and bring the whole place down.

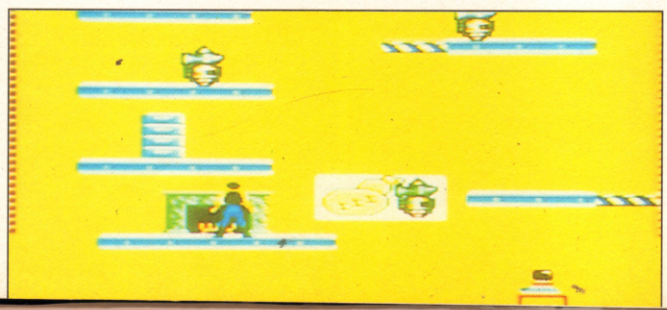
The bits of the password conundrum are hidden all over Elvin's domain, so you must search every single bit of furniture. Searching takes time, and during this time robots make their way towards you, in the hope of catching you unawares. The robots fire electrical pulses, so it's best not to get too close to them if you wish to avoid the terrifying scream of a doomed adventurer echoing through the walls of Elvin's tower.

It is also possible to find and use passwords which will reset elevators, which allow access to the many other levels of Elvin's haunt, and codes that disable some robots within a room.

To be honest, I have never understood what so many people liked about this game. Okay, so the animation of Agent 4125 somersaulting around is good and the sound effects (screams and speech) bring life to the game, but ultimately the whole process ends up being repetitive.



Agent 4125 crouches in the lift and tries to figure out the jigsaw pieces for the password to destroy Elvin Atombender.



GRAPHICS **89%**
✓ The large palette of the Sega makes the game very attractive.
✓ The main sprite is very well detailed and brilliantly animated

SOUND **97%**
✗ The sound effects are average – even poor.
✓ However, the sampled ditties are stunning and a first on the Sega.

PLAYABILITY **87%**
✓ A classic game, but the puzzles do get samey rather too quickly.
✓ Will have you staying a while, maybe even forever.

£29.99 ▼ OUT 10/90

MASTER SYSTEM 87%

MAT MANIA CHALLENGE

ATARI ■ SPORTS SIMULATION

Wrestling with a slippery pint is more like Julian Boardman's territory, but he donned his trunks and took to the mat for this corker

Welcome, grapple fans. This is Ken Walton introducing another hour's entertainment this Saturday lunchtime." Aaah those were the days, Dickie Davies, Big Daddy and Giant Haystacks. It was all fixed, of course, but it provided a few minutes' excitement for all those bingo-junkie grandmothers out there in the provincial town halls.

Mat Mania Challenge has little to do with all that really. You have, unwisely in my opinion, entered the Atari Wrestling Federation Championships. Winning is your only objective, but strangely enough survival seems to have gone out of the window, as a series of opponents is faced in the quest for that ultimate of trophies.

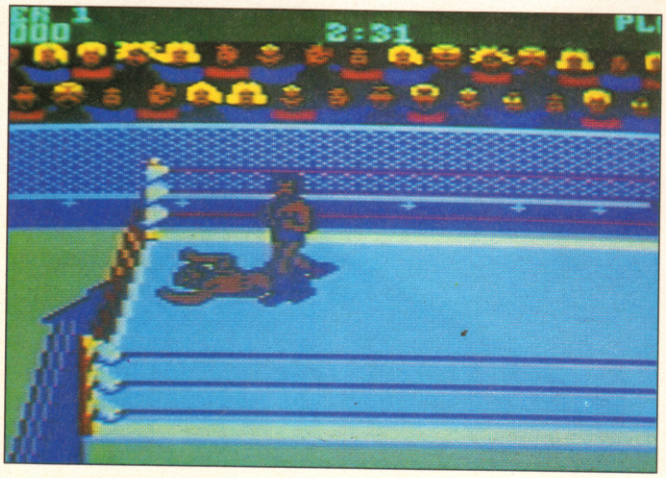
Winning a match is fairly simple, in theory. Pin down your opponent for a count of three, not easy until he's tired; keep him out of the ring for a count of 20, again not easy as you've got to get him out of the ring first; or score the most points in the three-minute match. If you beat one opponent then it is on to the next round of the championship.

At your disposal is a surprisingly large number of moves, ranging from a Clothesline to a Piledriver. Which move is made will depend on what position you are in. For instance, if you are in a headlock, hitting the left button will drop the other guy's back onto your knee, whereas if you were standing up, the left button would merely punch. It is perfectly possible and reasonably simple to sling your adversary into the ropes and catch him on the chin with a flying kick before he has a chance to do anything more than grimace. But be careful if you miss and happen to end up languishing painfully on the floor, the other wrestler could just as easily climb one of corner posts and slam down across your muscle-bound stomach.

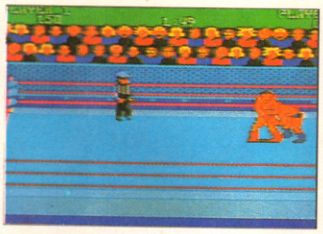
Certain strategies soon come into play. After a few matches are played, wearing the opponent down with punches makes it easier to pin him down later. When he does go down, pick him up and slap him about a bit to increase your score and weaken him further.

What makes it even better is that two players can implement all these moves on each other, in a head-to-head three-match challenge. All the blood, sweat and tears re-enacted on the screen as you and a friend try to beat the living crap out of each other.

Everyone knows that two-player fighting games are always best when it's at a two-player level, it brings out all that latent aggression that neither of you wanted to bring to the surface, and some might say that it is a valuable safety valve. I'd rather just say it was a pretty good game.



In the red trunks we have player two, and in the blue trunks player one. The humbug mint in the middle is the referee.



"Left a bit, no right a bit, right again!" Jumping off a post is a delicate business in any sort of game.

GRAPHICS **63%**
✓ Bright and colourful with a large range of well-defined movements.
✗ Unimaginative animation, sprites seem to glide.

SOUND **79%**
✓ Good spot effects.
✗ Little soundtrack music.

PLAYABILITY **62%**
✓ Fast and frantic action to keep the interest up.
✗ Some of the moves are difficult to get the hang of.

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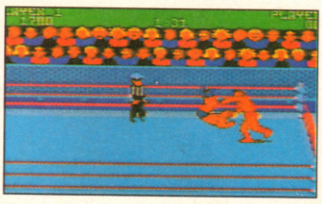
ATARI 7800
81%

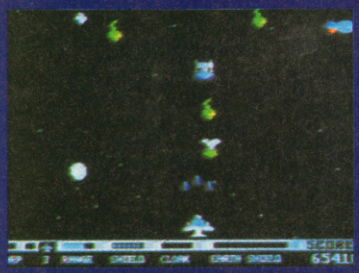
The hammer throw onto the ropes could end in a flying kick to the incoming jaw, or maybe an elbow to the throat.



PLANET SMASHERS

ATARI ■ VERTICAL SHOOT-'EM-UP

It must be difficult to find something that makes a game different and better than all the others on the ubiquitous Atari 2600 and 7800. The task is made even more arduous by the fact that *Asteroids* comes free, one of the most playable games of all time. So when this vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up came along I began to wonder what the guys could have done to make it worthwhile.



Everything on the screen must be shot if the Earth is to be saved – but do you care?

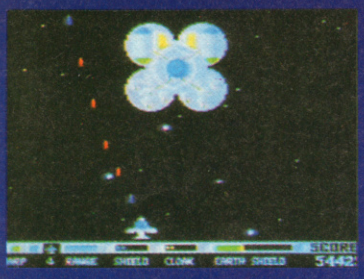
The plot goes thus. Earth is being bombarded by various projectiles and alien craft from outer space. Any that get past your gun deplete the Earth Shield, and once that's gone the Earth dies and all your lives except one vanish and your are left to carry on as long as possible.

There are, of course, the obligatory power-ups, shields and cloaking devices, plus a rather ingenious level-skip device. To skip to the end of the level, a three-colour code must be broken. Certain aliens will drop gems which change colour when shot, the right colours out of six must be picked up in the right order, and when this is done it is straight to the end-of-level alien for a meeting with doom.

Disaster strikes. But it could be considered as a late entrant to the Best Fireworks Display of 2463 AD competition.

Planet Smashers is certainly up to scratch as far as playability is concerned. The aliens have some devious little moves, and the colour codes are often random, meaning you have to test all six colours three times each whilst saving the Earth, not easy. Worth a look.

Then, of course, you get the old flower power crew, even up here in deep space.



GRAPHICS **73%**
✗ Fairly limited detail on the aliens.
✓ Good use of a limited palette.

SOUND **69%**
✗ Not up to the machine's abilities.
✗ The tune and effects soon become very irritating.

PLAYABILITY **76%**
✗ Unoriginal and repetitive.
✓ Very fast and frantic action.

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ATARI 7800
76%

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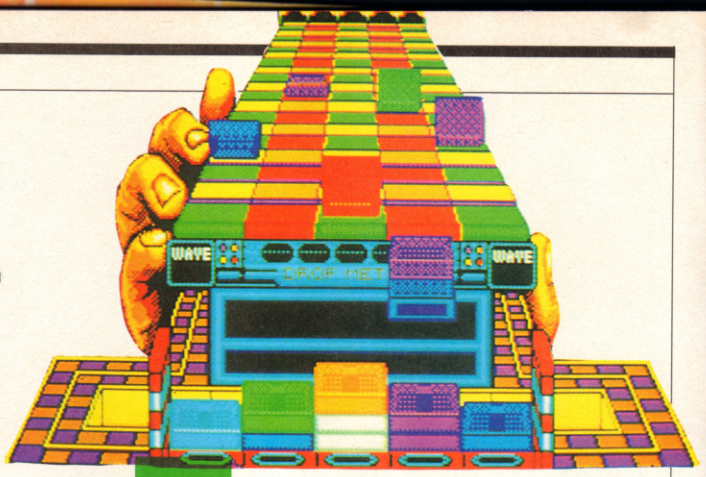


the Klax sequel will feature a giant hand trying to grout around all the tiles that were made in Klax

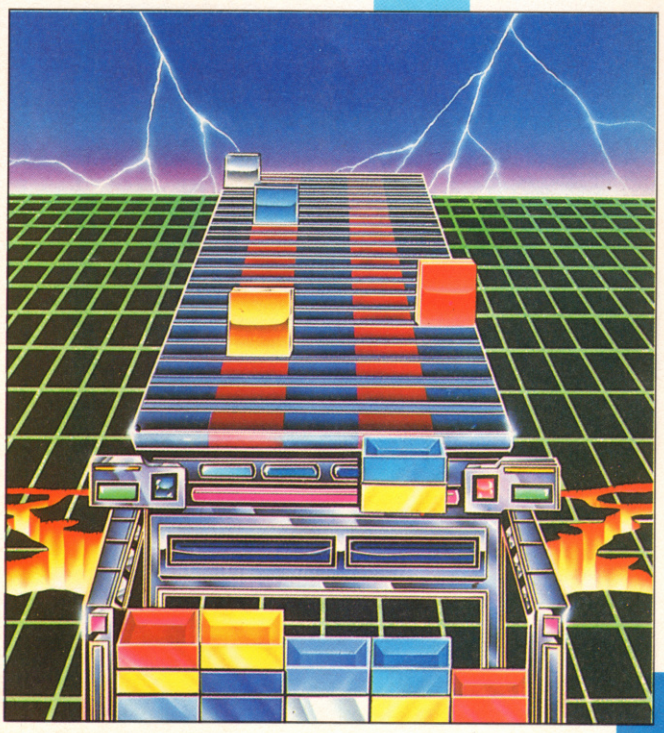
ATARI ■ ARCADE PUZZLE

Puzzling king Les Ellis tackles the ageless classic tile game

You've played it in the arcades, you've played it in your own home (on the computers and consoles), now you can play *Klax* any time, any place, anywhere. The game is based around tick-tack-toe and in the best tradition of puzzle games is a doddle to pick up but fiendishly difficult to put down.

The basic idea is to catch tiles tumbling down a ramp and pile them up in bins below. By flipping tiles into the bins you create rows of the same coloured tiles. The rows can be vertical, horizontal or diagonal; three or more tiles in a row form a klax (hence the name). Once a klax has formed, the tiles in the klax disappear to leave more space. Different amounts of points are awarded for different types of klaxes. This may seem easy but the game soon speeds up to make it devilishly difficult.

The classic Klax makes it onto the first of the handhelds – are more portable versions to follow?



If you fail to catch a tile or your paddle is too full to take any more (it can hold five) then the tile will fall to its pitiful death and go to wherever it is that little tiles go to when they die. Too many drops and you're out of the game.

Wild card tiles (flashing) fall down occasionally and these can be used to represent any colour and make up any difficult klaxes. If things get a bit too easy, you can increase the speed of the oncoming tiles by pushing down. If things are getting too hard (more likely), you can throw back any unwanted tiles (however, they will return!).

There are 100 levels to the game. Before the level commences, a clear (sexy) voice explains what type of klaxes must be created to complete the level. Sometimes only diagonal klaxes will score, other times it may just be a case of survival before a certain number of tiles pass.

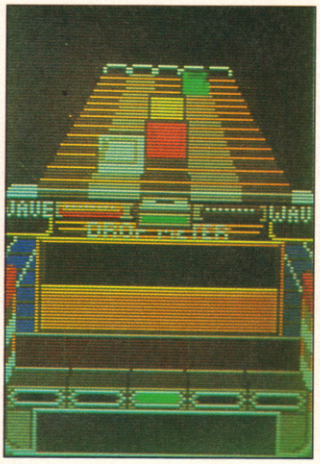
On completion of a wave, you are awarded bonus points, the amount depends on the wave finished, the amount of space in the bin, tiles left on the ramp and any warp points for that wave.

Some waves are warp waves and on completion will display a wave selection screen where you can choose to either go to the next wave or travel to a higher wave.

There are many different strategies that can be employed during *Klax* and most will have to be mastered in order to score megapoints and reach the higher realms.

Without doubt, *Klax* has class. From the rotating hand on the title screen to the superb sound and speech during the game. The speech, in particular, is used to great effect. As well as the young lady announcing each level, she lets out an excited "Yeah!" if you make a five-tile klax, and the crowd applaud or groan depending on your state of play.

Unlike other versions, there's no two-player option, which isn't really a drawback because nothing could be gained by attaching two Lynxes together. For sheer fun, *Klax* on the Lynx is superb. Many a late night, and subsequently a sore neck, has been spent trying to beat Mint-Aero's (claimed) top score on level 87. Of course, no-one was around to witness the record-breaking achievement (again) – funny that...



Klax requires the Lynx to be rotated through 90-degrees Gauntlet-style.

GRAPHICS 75%
✓ Clear action that really hots up when the speed increases.
✓ Vivid tiles and a realistic 3-D perspective.

SOUND 98%
✗ No music, but effects make up for it.
✓ Brilliant use of speech, applause and groans – great stuff.

PLAYABILITY 85%
✓ Fiendishly addictive. Once picked up there's no putting it down.
✓ If you own a Lynx and don't own Klax, you're mad!

£29.99 ▼ OUT NOW
ATARI ST
92%

Tic-tac-tile – Les smells vile.

FIRE & FORGET II

TITUS ■ RACING SHOOT-'EM-UP

Thunderstruck thundermaster Les Ellis gets driven round the bend to save the world

Retirement never comes easy. When you've been a hero all your life, the thought of settling down in a Welsh cottage, tending sheep and counting daffodils, is not a welcome one. As you arise to the sound of chirping birds one morning, you notice an important message on your fax machine – you're back in action.

The message is from John Torofex, security consultant for the International Peace Conference in Megapolis. He's been tipped off that a group of ruthless mercenaries are on their way to the centre of the city intent wreaking havoc and murdering the conference delegates. Your help is required – pronto!

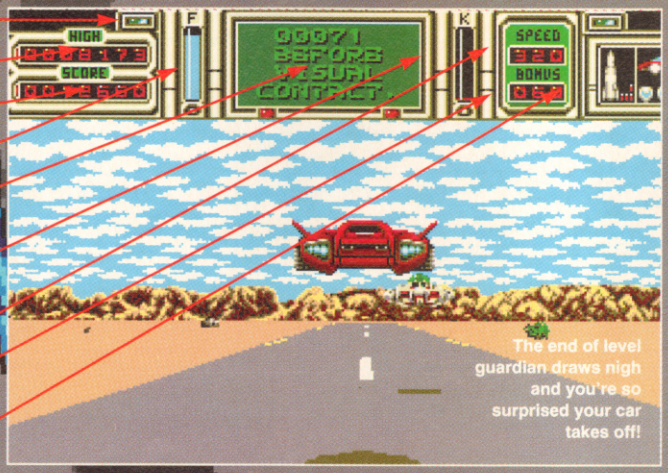
The villains must be stopped on the roads before they get to the conference centre. Luckily you've just had the Thunder Master II serviced, so you're ready for action. The 850bhp engine resonates beneath your foot, the rosso red paintwork shimmering in the dawn sun, these guys had better watch out. The car comes equipped with CD player as standard, but what makes it extra special are the ionic phasers, missile launchers, propulsion system for flight and go faster stripes.

Obviously, coming from behind, you'll meet the mercenary minions first. Get rid of these as soon as possible as it's the head of the convoy that you really want. The onslaught is made up of five convoys, killing one leader will transfer you onto another street with another set of vehicles.

As you make your way through the convoy, you'll encounter many types of enemy vehicles, from jeeps to tanks, and every one must be dispatched. Most can be cleared using your normal blasters, but some particularly tough ones will need a missile up the rear if they're to make way.

The all-important commodity of fuel can be picked up along the way, as can any extra missiles, lives and kerosene cans (for flight) which you may like to chuck in the boot.

Talking of boots, anyone know where chemists go to buy their shoes...?



Number of lives
Highest score of the day
Your meagre score
Amount of fuel in your tank
Messages from your onboard computer
Don't start flying till you've got enough kerosene
Your speed
Bonus you'll receive when you pick up fuel
Symbols represents missiles

The end of level guardian draws nigh and you're so surprised your car takes off!

GRAPHICS 65%
✗ Not very convincing 3-D perspective.
✓ Smooth scrolling landscapes and reasonable sprite animation.

SOUND 66%
✗ Pity there's no option to turn the naff background music off.
✓ Suitable crunching effects with a few screeching sounds.

PLAYABILITY 64%
✗ Simplistic fun that won't hold the player's attention for very long.
✓ If you like a pick-up-and-play blaster, this is just the job.

£24.99 ▼ OUT NOW

AMIGA 65%

GRAPHICS 65%
✗ No great detail to speak of, with poor backgrounds.
✓ Good use of colour, vivid sprites and reasonable animation.

SOUND 61%
✗ No improvement over the Amiga; still an annoying tune.
✗ Simple sound effects. They're not even sampled.

PLAYABILITY 66%
✗ Not one of the classic racing games. In fact, the original is better.
✓ Initial attraction due to its simplicity and bright colours.

£24.99 ▼ OUT NOW

IBM PC 65%

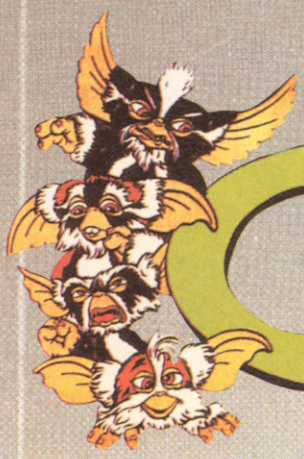
GRAPHICS 82%
✓ Clear and distinctive. Some of the best ever on the Master System.
✓ So fast and smooth you won't have time to blink.

SOUND 70%
✗ Still the same grating tune which has you reaching for the volume.
✓ White noise effects keeps the action explosive.

PLAYABILITY 79%
✓ More playable than the 16-bit versions by far.
✓ A great racing/shoot-'em-up game with lots of action.

£29.99 ▼ OUT NOW

MASTER SYSTEM 78%



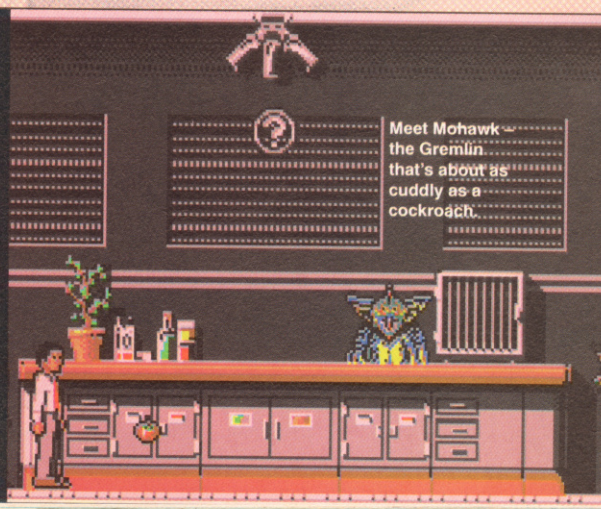
GREMLINS

THE NEW BATCH

Never one to be afraid of bright lights and eating after midnight, Julian Boardman was the ideal chap to take on the Gremlins

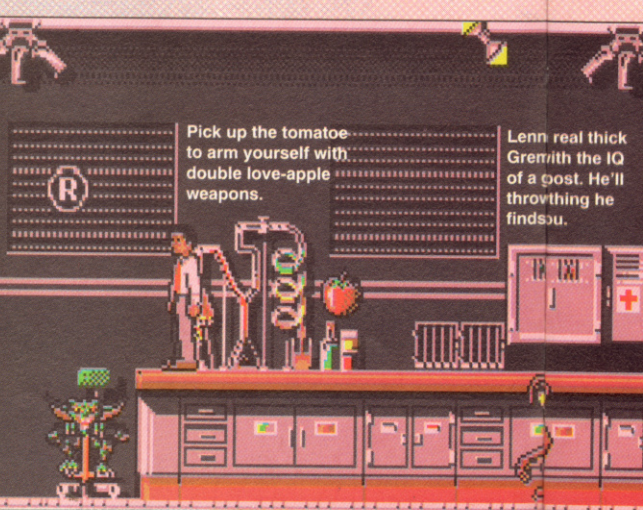
ELITE ■ ARCADE ACTION

Face the camera, y'll. Let's see a big smile. On the count of three I want you to say 'Jack and Jill went up the hill and then they parted' without moving your lips.



Meet Mohawk – the Gremlin that's about as cuddly as a cockroach.

Pogo is full of bounce. He jumps around unpredictably and is worth 75 points if killed.



Pick up the tomatoe to arm yourself with double love-apple weapons.

Lenn real thick Grem with the IQ of a post. He'll throw thing he finds ou.

Oooh, Billy's a proud lad. He's picked up a bonus icon which gives him super turbo powerd piss for knocking out Gremlins. What a lucky lad.

The Gremlins have taken over the asylum. Well, they've taken over the slyly named Clamp Plaza, which is slowly turning into an asylum. Coincidentally, this is where Billy and Jenny (played by Zach Gallagher and Pheobe Cates in the film), the stars of the first adventure, are working. Some idiot has fed Gizmo and got him wet, so we all know what happens now, Gremlins a-go-go. It's up to Billy to save the day again before the Gremlins take over Clamp Tower and ultimately New York – and he's only got one night to do it!

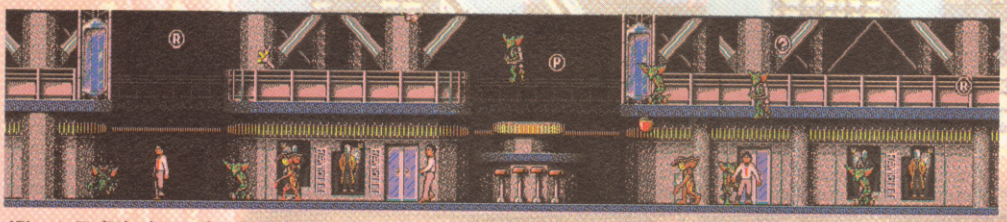
The game sees Billy, equipped with a torch because Gremlins hate bright lights, fighting his way through the five flick-screen levels of the tower, with the sole aim of wiping out all the Gremlins before everything starts getting really silly.

The Gremlins come in several different shapes and sizes – there's a tart, one on a pogo stick, another on a skateboard, yet another on a jet-pack, and even one on a rocket – and Billy has to expose all of these to bright light before they get to him.

Simple, yeah? No! There are a stupid amount of very fast-moving Gremlins, some of which take as many as three shots with the torch (or frisbee or tomato) to kill as they move towards you. A lot of them are surprise elements which appear from the side of the screen or from behind a bench without any warning at all, killing Billy and leaving you about to have a massive tantrum and throw your computer out of the window. Then sanity prevails and the disk goes out of the window instead – this game is so-o-o-o frustrating.

On the plus side there are some excellent sound effects, the speech when Billy dies, and the chuckles of the Gremlins, all of which appear to be sampled. There even seems to be a bit of Star Trek in there as the lift doors slide open, and the torch fires. The characters themselves are all superbly detailed but it all seems to pale as the joystick flies across the room in frustration.

Admittedly, platform games do need an element of difficulty to make them addictive but this really has gone too far.



A™ section™ of™ level™ 2™. If™ Billy™ picks™ up™ a™ weapon™ within™ a™ level™, the™ weapon™ is™ only™ useable™ during™ the™ level™ for™ a™ short™ time™. weapon.

GRAPHICS **66%**

✓ Rambo Gizmo epitomizes the high quality of sprites.

✓ Cute, cunning, cuddly, conniving. Good animation too.

SOUND **60%**

✓ Great effects, especially the speech on the opening titles.

✓ Good music but too repetitive.

PLAYABILITY **64%**

✗ Should be easier, even for Atari owners.

✓ A close tie-in with the film and a challenging game to boot.

£24.99 ▼ OUT NOW

ATARI ST

74%

BONUS ICONS

- (L) Life – gives Billy an extra life.
- (?) Mystery – Could be any of the bonuses, apart from Rambo Gizmo.
- (R) Rambo Gizmo – Gizmo flies in on a parachute and kills any Gremlins he can on the way.
- (T) Time – Increases or decreases the amount of time you have left to complete the level.
- (P) Points – Could be 500 or 1,000 extra points for Billy.

GRAPHICS **69%**

✓ Some great Gremlin sprites, all recognisable from the movie.

✓ Exciting backdrops containing scenes from the movie.

SOUND **62%**

✗ The in-game tune soon begins to grate.

✓ Superb spot effects – especially the digitised ditties.

PLAYABILITY **64%**

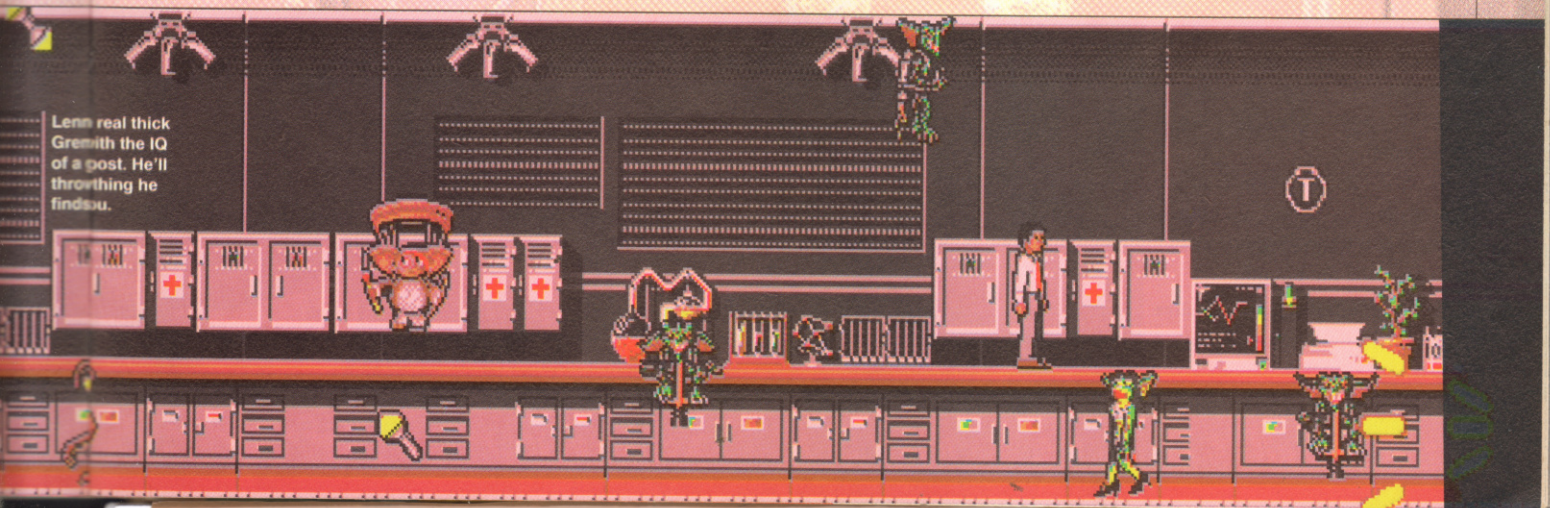
✗ Not exactly easy to get into – very frustrating, in fact.

✓ A lot of difficulty for platform enthusiasts to revel in.

£24.99 ▼ OUT NOW

AMIGA

74%



Lenn real thick Gremith the IQ of a post. He'll throwthing he findsu.

UN SQUADRON

US GOLD ■ SHOOT-'EM-UP

Squadron Leader Les Ellis joins the United Nation's latest bunch of tough guys to kick some Arab ass

TURN ON, POWER UP

UN Squadron has an amazing array of weapons. Follow this RAZE guide on what to pick up and what to drop.

16 WAY SHOT – Launches missiles in all 16 directions.

BULPUP – Launches the Bulpup wide-range missile.

BULPUP II – A newer version of Bulpup.

GUN POD – Shoots at the ground, but runs out eventually.

SUPER SHELL – A strong weapon that can pierce armour.

NAPALM – Burns up the ground and anything on it.

ROUND LASER – Fires a laser over a wide range.

SUPER SHELL II – Like the Super Shell but more destructive.

PHOENIX – A homing missile of awesome power.

BOMB – Regular ground attack weapon

BOMB II – More powerful version of the above.

FALCON – Strongest homing missile available.

NAPALM II – Mega powerful version of the ground attack weapon.

BIG BOY – The most destructive device known to man – okay, it's a smart bomb.

Them bods in the Middle East have always been trouble to us civilised Westerners. They're always squabbling over something, be it oil prices or the latest invasion of some country. Now, due to civil wars, these countries are facing economic and social ruin. The governments of these countries have become easy targets for unscrupulous arms dealers who now have their eyes on some easy profits. They have infiltrated the weaker governments, and with promises of wealth and power have managed

Choose your craft and hit the Arabs with everything you've got – could be painful mind.

the seemingly impossible and united the feuding Arabs.

The UN top secret agent, Dick Rangerous, has reported back on the strength of the Arab armies, and the Security Council have decided something must be done before it's too late.

Looking through the files there are only a few people considered tough enough to handle the current crisis, the word goes out for them to be assembled.

Either Mickey Simon (America), Greg Gates (Denmark) or Shin Kazama (Japan) can be chosen for your task, with a second player also choosing one of the three in two-player mode. After selection you must make a trip to the shop where the hardware retailer can sell you some top-notch weapons, energy or shields. What's a bit strange is that you have to pay for the lot, even though they're being used to save the world!

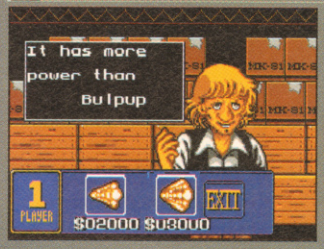
Every so often, destroying an entire fleet of enemy vehicles will make them drop an energy globe, collecting these will endow your

Clockwise from above: your mission briefing. Into the shop to buy weaponry. And finally the Arabs' new war machine comes up against your small but perfectly formed F-20 fighter.

aircraft with more power to the main weapon. At the end of each level a special weapon will appear to aid you in the destruction of the big war machine.

Extra money is gained on the clearance of each area, and this can be spent back at the shop to enhance your craft.

The sheer size of the task makes this game a challenge but there are problems. Read on.



GRAPHICS 79%

✗ The screen gets too cluttered too quickly and makes it hard to follow.

✓ Peripheral graphics are well drawn and presented.

SOUND 71%

✗ Naff title tune and annoying music all the way through.

✓ You can't fail with sound effects in shoot-'em-ups.

PLAYABILITY 73%

✗ There are many better two-player shoot-'em-ups on the market.

✓ As a mindless shoot-'em-up, addicts will sure find this difficult.

£29.99 ▼ OUT NOW

AMIGA

77%

GRAPHICS 74%

✗ Poorly defined sprites that are too small for comfort.

✗ Difficult to make out what's going on half the time.

SOUND 68%

✗ Very harsh tunes.

✗ Effects have to be turned down to preserve your sanity.

PLAYABILITY 69%

✗ After dying a couple of times, you don't feel like another game.

✓ There's loads to shoot and plenty of challenge.

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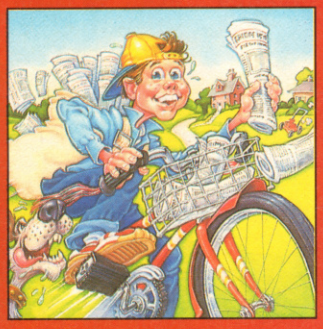
ATARI ST

71%

PAPERBOY

VARIOUS ■ ARCADE ACTION

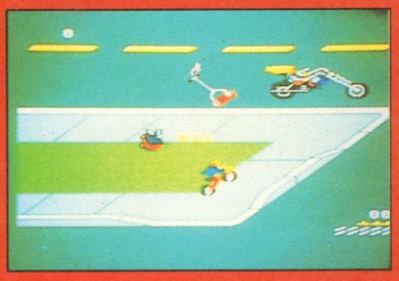


The ubiquitous *Paperboy* has reared its not so ugly head on the Lynx, courtesy of Atari, and the Master System, courtesy of US Gold/Sega. Once again it's a case of a best-selling game being released on a new format to maximise sales.

Still, that aside, this remains a reasonably enjoyable, but hardly mind-expanding game. The object is to deliver papers to the houses along your route over the course of a week, losing as few customers as possible. If you miss the mailbox, home owners withdraw their subscriptions with cries of "It never would have happened in my day!", "I fought the war for you young man!" and so on. Completing a perfect round will encourage non-subscribers to re-open their trust for your talent on two wheels, re-ordering their daily newsprint.

Of course, in the best tradition of arcade games, all is not that simple. Scattered along your route are numerous obstacles, some of them as equally mobile as your good self: dogs, stereos, rastas on BMXs, babies, cars, skateboarders on acid – it's all there. Hit anyone of them and it's career over, pal, whilst the newspapers carry headlines of how a paperboy's lot is not a happy one etc, etc.

Surprisingly enjoyable for such a simple game.



Arrrggghhh, watch out for the Hell's Angel.

GRAPHICS **75%**
✗ The houses in the background could do with a little more attention.
✓ Extremely colourful cartoon sprites.

SOUND **76%**
✗ The limited number of effects lets it down.
✓ Sound is surprisingly good, especially when a window smashes.

PLAYABILITY **76%**
✗ A lack of variety in the bonus screens.
✓ Makes repetition work for it, instead of against.

£29.99▼ OUT 12/90
MASTER SYSTEM
76%

GRAPHICS **69%**
✓ Clear and precise graphics which don't clutter the Lynx's screen.
✓ Very colourful with some clever touches.

SOUND **65%**
✗ The game is too old and tired for the exciting and new Lynx.
✓ The perspective makes it easy to chuck the papers accurately.

PLAYABILITY **71%**
✗ The game is too old and tired for the exciting and new Lynx.
✓ The perspective makes it easy to chuck the papers accurately.

£29.99▼ OUT 12/90
LYNX
78%

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GAZZA'S EUROSOC

ACTIVE MINDS/EMPIRE ■ SOCCER SIMULATION

With Gazzamania sweeping a disgruntled nation that needs a hero, Julian Boardman finds out if the second Gazza game can live up to the legend

For those of you with little or no experience of the north-east, beyond Sid the Sexist and the Fat Slags, let me tell you it's not all Rugby League, Newcastle Brown Ale and shagging in bus stops, they quite like their football as well. Or at least one Paul Gascoigne does.

For Empire to release a football game in a year that has seen so many is a brave step, but reflects the adulation and commercial benefit that Gazza can bring, plus the fact we are now back into the season, half-forgetting most of the World Cup mania. The only thing to survive from that month-long tournament is the picture of Gazza overcome with emotion, now immortalised on a thousand T-shirts worn by anyone from four-year-old girls and lager louts to senior citizens with less sense and dignity than they were born with.

Gazza's name is going to guarantee a huge success for Empire, but is it warranted...?

For once a cliche accurately describes *Gazza's Eurosoccer Live*, it really is a game of two halves, strategy and arcade. The strategy side gives a huge range of options and parameters to be tweaked and adjusted to fine tune the performance of your team.

The game is played on a week-to-week basis, and each week before the match any one of the 16 human managers can take decisions. Transfers can be made from a databank of nearly 2,000 players, and Gazza gives his advice on which will be the best buy for the money, details of injuries, booking and suspensions. Because the game is played on a weekly basis, elements like injury and suspension can be properly implemented to make the simulation more realistic. The players can also be taken to the gym to have their fitness checked and injuries cared for.

The tactics editor allows the manager to arrange the team's tactical response to set pieces, free kicks from them or the opposition, any corner and so on. Reactions can be guided depending on which of the nine areas of the pitch the event takes place in. If there is an opposition free-kick just outside the box, a wall may be formed, but if it is further down pitch then the players might be instructed to mark their opposite numbers.

Every week, each manager goes through the large cycle of options available to them before they go on to play the week's fixture, either versus the computer or against one of the other player-controlled sides in the four-division, 48-team league made up of the best teams in Europe.

The game itself consists of the popular overhead view, with a pitch scanner, and play moves, unusually, from left to right. The area of the pitch seen on the screen is probably equivalent to about 30 yards of the pitch. The players are a lot more detailed than we are used to, and are seen in a forced 3-D environment.

The intelligent joystick controls allow a wide range of shots – chips, lobs, etc – and three different shot strengths.

The usual one-off game of football is available for anyone who wants a quick arcade style bash without the hassle of management, and there are also four practice options to be utilised.

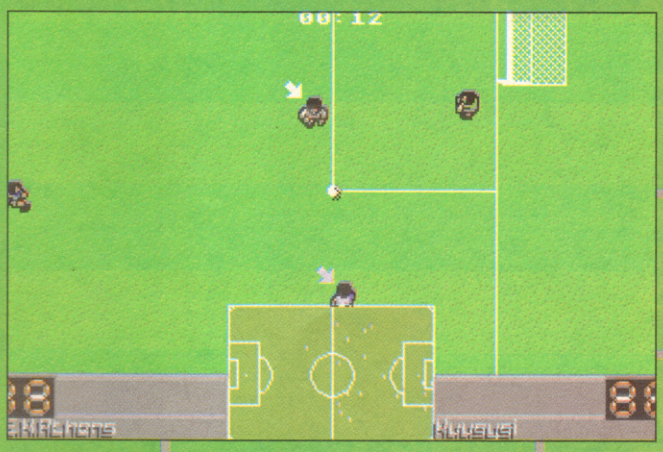
At half-time we get a commentary from Bob – a chap who can barely remember his name and seems to be caricature of Alan

Top right: a moment of drama as the keeper is forced to dive to his right.

Gazza's Eurosport comes to you from Active Minds (those crazy guys behind *Total Recall*).

Giss a tune Gazza...

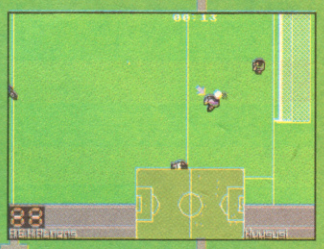
CCER LIVE



Above: 12 seconds into the match and a goal kick is about to be taken.

Right: milli-seconds from the goal mouth, can the keeper do his stuff?

Bottom right: on a blistering run, "Magic" Boardman sends the defence sprawling



Parry and all the other truly confused commentators – and one from Gazza himself. Bob's commentary consists of various vague statements in the "two goals could have changed the result of this match totally" vein, but Gazza's are based on the stats of the match and are intended to be of aid to the players, showing the strong and weak points of their game.

Graphically, the game is far superior to the working shots that have been seen in previous versions of *Gazza's Eurosoccer Live*. The pitch has been tidied up and the icons in the management screens are far more professional. Playability is equal to *Kick Off 2*, but it has the added bonus of a complex but easily useable management system, something that is getting more frequent in mass market games. This is where Gazza wins out: Empire have got the name but they have also got the game. A game that is going to be played for a long time beyond the purchase date. Gazza is already a name that has a place in nearly every household, so should the game.

The Amiga version should be near identical to the Atari ST and STE, but with a slightly larger area of pitch onscreen. An IBM PC version is planned but details are sketchy at the moment. Other versions will be available for 8-bit consoles, the GX4000 and the C64GS, but these will not include the management sections.

PREVIEW

WOT A LAD!

Born in Gateshead, Gazza joined Ipswich Town FC at the age of 13, then went on to Newcastle United as an associate schoolboy at 14. His league debut was against Southampton for Newcastle in April '85. He joined Tottenham Hotspur in '88 for £2 million, making 66 appearances and scoring 21 goals. His international career began six months later, and he is now the proud owner of 15 caps. He has also released a pop single with Lindisfarne called "Fog on the Tyne". It's crap.

Internationale can only sit and watch as West Ham score (but then they wake up and it's all a dream).

GRAPHICS **89%**

✓ Fast moving pitch with intricately detailed sprites.
✓ Clear and simple to understand management screens.

SOUND **86%**

✓ The usual whistles and cheers are all here.
✓ "Fog on the Tyne" is not included in this game.

PLAYABILITY **91%**

✓ Loads of moves and shots can be made on pitch.
✓ Week to week basis gives matches and management depth.

£24.99 ▼ OUT NOW

ATARI ST

91%

19

RAGE

RAVE

WING COMMANDER

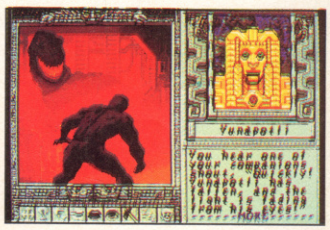
ORIGIN/MINDSCAPE ■ SPACE COMBAT SIMULATOR

"Yeeeeoowwww, weeeerrrrrruummm, blam, blam, blam, blam, whuuuuuuiiieeuuu, arrgggh, vrooommmm, kabooommm!!!" as Paul Rigby would say

It all started in 2629.105 when the exploration ship Iason stumbled on a strange spacecraft. Captain Andropolos stopped his ship, beamed the standard welcome message and waited... for 22 minutes. The Iason was then completely destroyed by the alien, later to be known as the Kilrathi vessel – all hands were lost. The war against Kilrathi had begun.

Now, 25 years later, you sit in the Confederation ship. She's a Bengal class Strike Carrier known as the Tiger's Claw. You? You're a young, second lieutenant eager to jump into your Hornet light fighter and begin your first mission.

Wing Commander is nothing short of a breakthrough in computer gaming. Origin have successfully made the transition from the simple *Star Wars* action game to the full-blown, cinematic experience that'll drop many a jaw.



One man, one ship, alone in the universe – until now...

The heart of the game is a space combat simulator. You pilot one of four spaceships (ranging from lightweight and poorly armed to heavily armoured and armed to the teeth). You will be re-assigned to different squadrons as you progress. Starting with the most basic fighter, at the lowest rank, you will be assigned a mission. They are always different and generally surround one of five types: defend, escort, intercept, patrol and strike. Each new mission is prefaced by a mission briefing from your CO. He will give you the details, the map, waypoints and special instructions such as warnings of asteroid and mine fields. Then it is out into space to fly your mission. Scenarios include hanging around a `jump point' and waiting for an enemy destroyer to appear out of hyperspace, fly a basic patrol, escort a freighter carrying a valuable vaccine, and so on.

As you travel towards your assigned target you will, as you would expect, fly in `dead space' where not a lot is happening. Flight sim enthusiasts will relish this aspect of the game as being part of the realism factor. However, if you don't care about the realism bit, or become impatient for action, you can just hit the autopilot option. This feature takes you directly to your waypoint. It accomplishes this in a very graceful manner by displaying a smooth fly-by, via an external view, of your ship and any companions. When you are switched back inside your cockpit, lo and behold you will have arrived at your destination.

Speaking of viewpoints there are lots. Internal, external, missile view, you name it. Weapons take the form of lasers (with a re-generating power supply) and various missiles. When you return you'll be given a post-mission briefing telling you how you got on, your kills and any re-assignments, rank increases and medals.

During the time between missions you can save your game in the "mess", chat to characters in the bar or play an arcade game that is, effectively, a simulation within a simulation. It presents a more action/arcade game, complete with its own high-scores, of the `simulated' mission flying you undertake within your missions. Don't forget to revisit the arcade though, as you might find that one of the crew may have topped your high score since you last played!

There's not only space action, the game is full of other areas to explore, like the officers' mess and the bar.

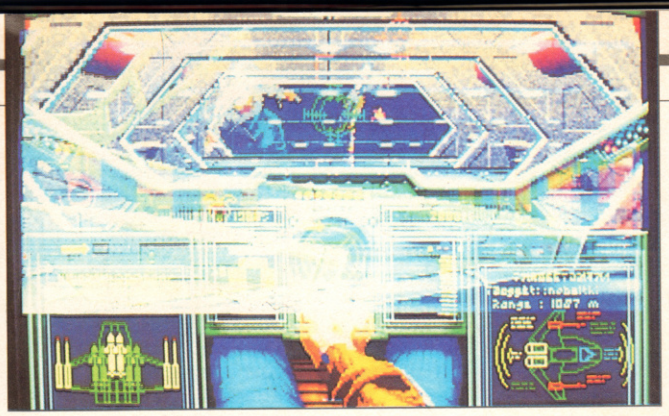
All sound boards are supported. A growing and welcome aspect of sound board support is that they generate sound effects as well as background music. AdLib sound is pretty good while the Roland LAPC-1 is stunning. The music constantly changes its emotional rhythm

CAP IT ALL

The most important accessory required when playing *Wing Commander* is the official baseball cap – made by Sunbelt, which is rather apt. According to Origin's Greg Malone, wearing this cap not only enhances your gameplay skills it also pays all of your bills and improves your general lifestyle. Hmm, pass that cap...

SECRET MISSIONS

The Secret Missions scenario disks are finishing development and should be on the streets before Christmas. Introducing 12 extra missions, the disk includes some new graphics (mainly enemy ships) and "new incidental graphics" which probably refer to meanwhile screens. The basic scenario follows the Tiger's Claw as it travels into the heart of the Kilrathi Empire.



They come from the left, they come from the right, there's no avoiding the evil Kilrathi.

depending on the events occurring on the screen. Blow the aliens to tiny pieces and the dramatic and urgent battle score will instantly change to a cheerful, victorious marching melody.

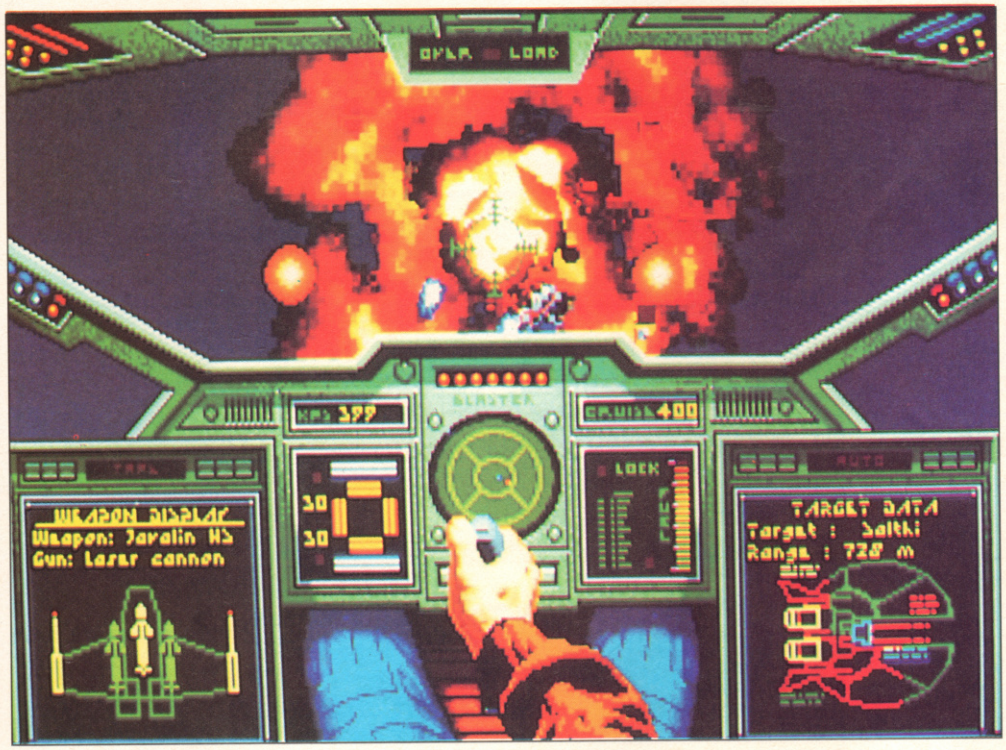
It is the `glue', or the meanwhile bits, to *Wing Commander* that makes it so special. You'll see cinematic effects such as panning and wonderfully choreographed animation sequences that, while being a little choppy and slow, are of such a high graphical standard that you won't really notice any detriment.

For example, just before your mission flight you'll see the nose of your ship pan into view. You'll see yourself in the cockpit, busy putting on your helmet while a ground crewman assists you in correcting your seatbelts. This is an excellent sequence that gives just the right amount of `high activity' you'd expect during the pre-takeoff period.

Wing Commander isn't just an aimless combat game though, there is a running plotline revolving, of course, around the progress of the campaign against the Kilrathi. Meanwhile screens update you with mini animation sequences that reflect how you are faring. If you find yourself failing more missions than you should, you will see the meanwhile screens reflect the negative position you are in. The final battles of the campaign will be fought defending the Tiger's Claw HQ. However, if you make good progress the final missions with involve blasting the Kilrathi sector command.

Frankly, I was overwhelmed at the professional manner in which *Wing Commander* has been produced. Cinematic effects, thrills, spills, depth of gameplay, beautiful animated sequences – *Wing Commander* is, without doubt, a strong contender for game of the year.

Wing Commander will blow your mind. The VGA graphics are some of the best PC action screens yet.

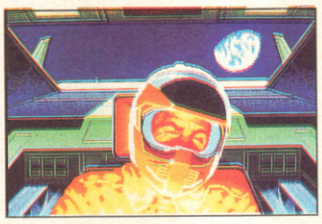


WINGING ITS WAY

One of the features of the gameplay is that you normally fly as a team, with a wingman (or wingwoman!). This is a sensible addition as each character that flies with you has their own personality. They'll either help or hinder you, taking on more than their fair share of the enemy, sticking by your side or aimlessly disregarding orders and doing what they please. You do have a communication option to contact them, issue requests and orders – although they won't always obey. You can also talk to the enemy – well, throw insults at them, actually.

Wing Commander was programmed by Chris Roberts (pictured) whose previous credits include Times of Lore and Bad Blood. The game comes from Stateside outfit Origin, a company better known for their Ultima roleplaying series – until now, that is!

Wing Commander is a far cry from previous Ultima games like Times of Lore and the Ultima series.



GRAPHICS **94%**
✓ You ain't seen nothing better – splendicious VGA screens
✓ Super atmosphere created by some great "meanwhile" screens

SOUND **87%**
✓ Full sound support for Roland, AdLib, etc, utilised to the full.
✓ It'll blow your mind!

PLAYABILITY **91%**
✓ Team competition, games within games, useful gameplay options, what a game!
✓ No tedious *Ultima* stuff here, it's pure action all the way.

PREVIEW
The only future conversion for *Wing Commander* is the Amiga. It is probable that only 512K will be needed to play the game, but 1Mb will be strongly recommended. It should be (almost) visually identical to the VGA version.

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IBM PC
93%

Ground control to Major Rigby.

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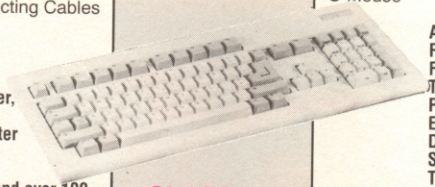

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MYSTIC DEFENDER

SEGA ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

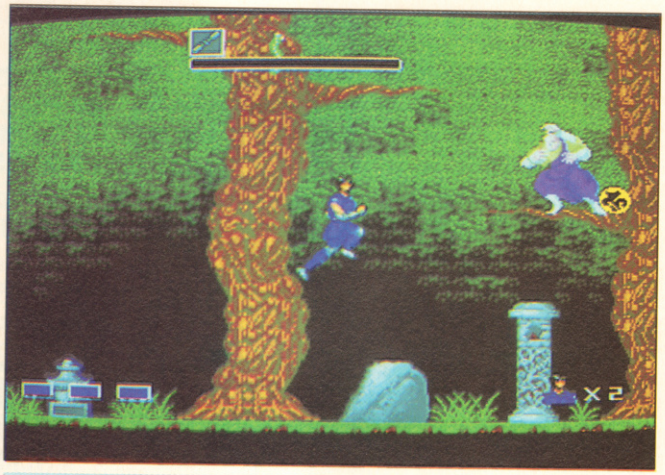
Les "ley" Ellis straps on a flame thrower and clears out his attic

With The Omen trilogy doing the rounds on ITV last month, the Devil's been a busy chap. Even his helpers have been swept off their feet in the rush to spread the Dev's "good" word. Take Zareth, for example, one of Beelzebub's trusted little helpers. The little whippersnapper has cooked up a plot to try and bring Zao, the wickedest wizard the world has ever known, back to life. And we're not talking hip and trendy here, we're talking sacrificing little babies wicked! In fact, as the guy is generally known as the Emperor of Evil, it would be most unwise to let little Zareth carry out his terrible plan.

This is where you step in. As Joe Yamato, all round nice guy and a one man army, you are the only man with enough power and skill to stop Zareth. You must travel to Zao's burial place, the Azuchi castle, stop Zareth and rescue the virgin princess Alexandra whose soul is to be used in the ceremony.

Nothing to lose your head over, grilled or fried.

Joe leaps to get the power against the man with three arms!



GRAPHICS **67%**

✓ Colourful, detailed, well-animated and often gigantic sprites.

✓ A wide range of backdrops giving each level its own individual feel.

SOUND **77%**

✗ Nothing big or particularly clever here, but you can play all the tunes.

✓ A different tune for each level, and gratifying sound effects.

PLAYABILITY **62%**

✗ Very hard to get into. And the bad guys just get tougher and tougher.

✓ The numerous spells add fun and variety to the game.

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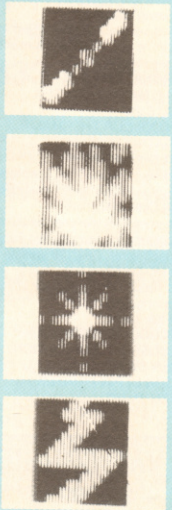
MEGA DRIVE

61%

THE BLACK MAGIC BOX



You carry Psycho magic with you at all times. With mental concentration you can form a huge ball in your hand, at maximum power it splits into three and decimates anything in range.

Flame magic appears at the end of round one. Hold down the fire button to create a wall of flame around you which eventually forms a fiery snake.

Sonic magic appears in round two. The six balls of power can fly around killing everything they hit.

Use of the Dragon Thunder magic in the fourth round gives you stoppable power.

Many people in ancient China commited suicide by eating half a kilo of salt.

BONUS BLOCKS

■ Strength (blue) increases your life pack by one.

■ This gives you an extra life.

■ Power (red) speeds up the power bar enabling you to use your magic more rapidly.

Many have travelled before you and failed, but none have possessed the powers which have been bestowed upon you. Since you were a child you have been trained in the art of magic. Now, at the grand old age of 645, you are a grandmaster magician, skilled in the art of conjuring up and casting spells (detailed further in the box elsewhere).

The trip to Zao's domain is a strange one. First you will find yourselves amongst the trees, and then onto the neverending world of steps. Round three takes you through some clanking machinery before you enter into the lava lake will overflows from level four. Here you'll be able to gain the Dragon Thunder magic by killing the first three faces of the six-faced phantom (honest). With old six-faces out of the way you encounter a world full of huge spiders pouncing their way towards you. Watch out for these guys as they club together to form Death Worms – the last one on the level is particularly gross. Round six takes a visit to the ghost's machine room, where all the inhabitants must be killed if you are to progress to the penultimate stage, the elevator maze. After successfully navigating your way through the maze you will finally reach Zao's lair.

But it's not just Zareth who's a menace, you'll find Zao can be more annoying – even though he's supposed to be dead! It is only when both the evil monstrosities are vanquished from the land of the living that you can search out the stunning Alexandra and live happily ever after...

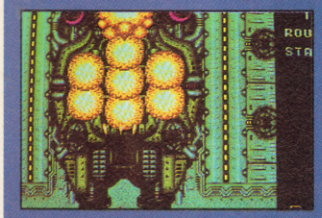
Not the sort of person you want to mess with in Mystic Defender.

TRUXTON

SEGA ■ SHOOT-'EM-UP

Les "Tom the Bomb" Ellis heads out to deepest space to chew gum and kick ass

Transport ship Belery was cruising its way peacefully through space when disaster struck. Those ruthless space bandits the Gidians rammed into the side of the ship, practically disabling it for good. No real problem there until the nature of the Belery's cargo spills out. The ship was



loaded down with top secret weapons; weapons that are now floating around in space just waiting to be picked up. The only thing between you and the weapons is the entire Gidian army.

There is something else: there's something weird out there, no-one knows what it is, but it fills the whole radar screen. Whatever it is, it must be destroyed before you can get to the weapons.

The only ship with even nearly enough fire power to do the job is the Super Fighter. It has weapons so powerful that they have never been used in anger. The only hope is for you to steal the Super Fighter and take it for a test drive. It's gonna be dangerous, but then the quiet life was always so boring. With a little luck you'll be back on Borogo in time to put the kettle on.

You start the mission with three lives and lose one on impact with the aliens or their gunfire. Your basic weapon is the power-shot but this can be enhanced or replaced by flying over the power-ups dropped by any aliens you blast. You also carry three Destroyer (smart) bombs.

So get out there, shoot anything that moves, and if it doesn't move shoot it anyway – after all, it's your ass on the line.

Man the guns and take out the all new bat-alien.

GRAPHICS **87%**

✓ Never a dull moment with colourful aliens and nice backdrops.

✓ Some of the biggest and baddest end-of-level guardians reside here.

SOUND **78%**

✗ Sound effects consist of little more than zaps, blops and exlosions.

✓ There's a great foot-tapping tune accompanying the frenetic action.

PLAYABILITY **82%**

✗ Action is fast and action packed – but ultimately easily learnt.

✓ If you've been jealous of Gun-Hed on the Engine, then get this.

£34.99 ▼ OUT NOW

MEGA DRIVE

85%

Truxton came out in Japan under the title Tatsujin

RAVE

THE REVENGE OF SHINOBI

SEGA ■ ARCADE ACTION

A bloody lip and dark inconspicuous clothing are nothing new to Julian Boardman. Jazzie B checks out the latest hit bop sound

Ever seen a film called Sakura Killers? It's about the ancient art of ninjitsu and the incredible things those who possess the power can do. The final scene of the film sees a ninja tunnelling underground faster than a speeding vole, then leaping out of the ground 50 foot in the air, performing a double somersault with a half-twist and a packet of dry roasted (5.6, 5.7, 5.6, 5.5), landing on the ground in front of an unsurprisingly gob-smacked adversary and proceeding to beat him in all manner of excruciatingly painful ways. What a film!

The Revenge of Shinobi is much the same as that piece of celluloid history, involving untold violence and improbable feats of magic and mind over matter. You are Musashi, the master ninja, your hands and feet are lethal. In your grasp every ninja weapon is an instrument of death.

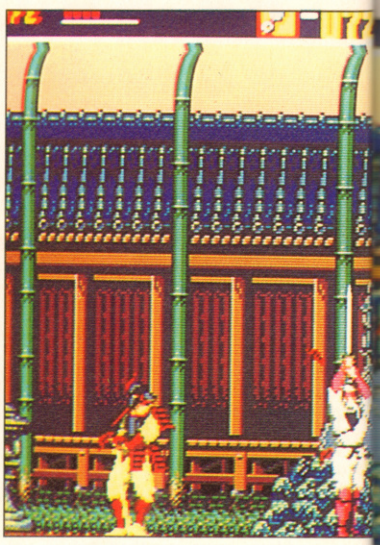
It is your task to defeat the evil ninja warriors of Neo Zeed, who along with other soldiers and spies have set out to take over the world. As a warning to you, Neo has killed your sensei, or teacher, and kidnapped the beautiful Naoko (6.0, 6.0, 6.0, 6.0). It is up to you to save the world, avenge the death of your sensei and rescue the enchanting lady. What a life!

Only by utilising deadly ninja fighting skills and your four ninja magics can you hope to achieve these objectives as you follow Neo Zeed and his underlings around eight cities of the world.

> the game originally appeared on import called The Super Shinobi

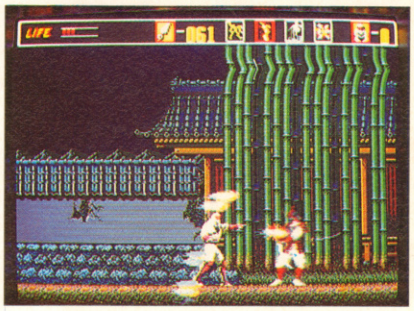
For close combat your only weapon is a dagger, and often this is the most productive, but for long distance destruction you must use your shuriken knives, in either a crouching or standing position. In the best tradition of ninjas, you can also pounce into the air with the grace of a cat. Pressing jump whilst at the top of your meteoric rise will send you into a very tight somersault (5.4, 5.5, 5.5, 5.3) and hitting fire will issue an arc of shurikens, showering your opponent in a deadly wall of metal. But be careful as this will use up a large number of your limited resources, possibly leaving you high and dry when you face up to the end of level bloke.

You are also in command of four disciplines of the ninja magic, each of which will take care of a particular situation. It is wise to familiarise yourself with each of them so that any situation can be handled quickly. You can only use one of these per life, so it's vital that they're not wasted.



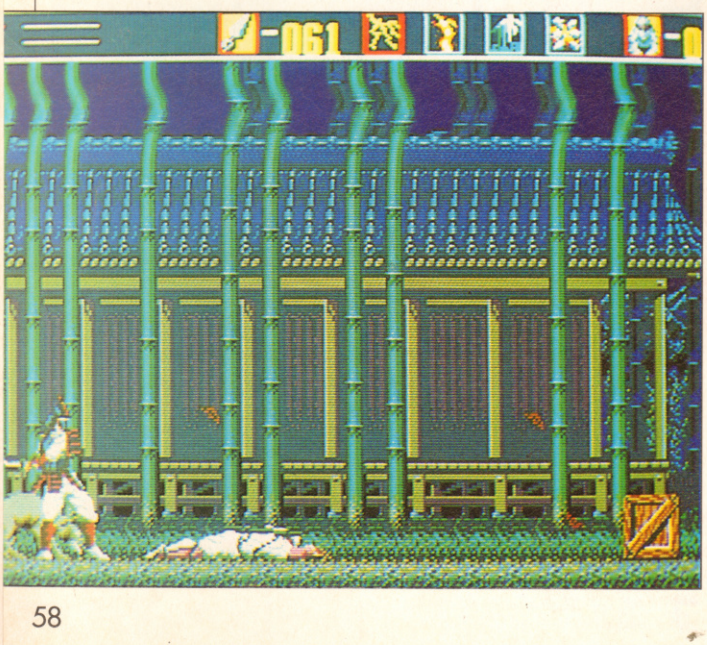
Your travels, as you search for Neo Zeed, take you through eight international districts, each containing three different scenes. One of the areas includes a romp with a shadow dancer (4.9, 5.0, 4.9, 4.8), one covers the Chinatown area of Detroit, while another brings you into contact with a flame-spewing brontosaurus (!).

Should you sustain a hit, it will reduce the amount of life bars. Once these run out, a life will be lost.

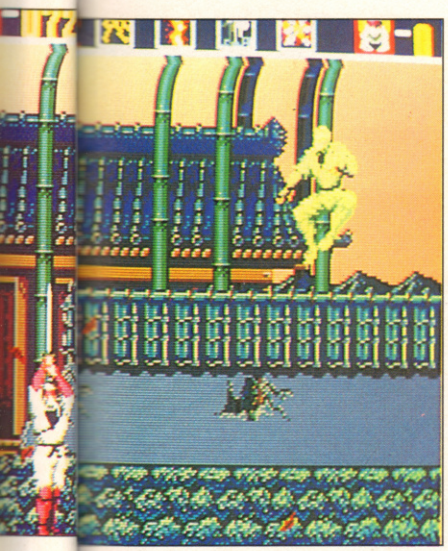


Setting the difficulty at the beginning can vary the amount of lives from one to nine. The number of shurikens left is also displayed and these can be added to by finding the icons hidden in various crates. The crates may also include an extra life, power-ups or extra health, but could just as easily hide a bomb which will explode when touched – not very nice is it?

The limited number of moves actu-



We must live by the quick, not by the dead.



ally help the game, making it easy to pick up and play without having to get bogged down in the instructions. The four different kinds of magic allow room for a certain amount of deduction as you try to work out which discipline will work most effectively for a particular situation. The game itself provides more than enough challenging opponents and scenarios to keep even the most demanding gamer busy. Even on the easy level it is still very difficult. It is often more a case of not being able to negotiate a particular physical hazard than facing a large number of insurmountable oriental enemies. This means that it has an extra dimension compared to the average ninja beat-'em-up, making it distressingly involving and hair-wrenchingly addictive.

GRAPHICS **93%**
✓ Spectacularly smooth parallax scrolling of colourful backgrounds.
✓ Impressive sprites and animation. Will take your breath away.

SOUND **89%**
✓ A great sound test option revealing the excellent spot effects.
✓ Groovy tunes play throughout. Also occasional sampled grunt.

PLAYABILITY **91%**
✓ Good selection of moves. The somersault is particularly amazing.
✓ Very varied, wide range of challenging opponents. Brilliant.

£34.99 ▼ OUT NOW
MEGA DRIVE
92%

IKAZUCHI (THE ART OF THUNDER)

Thunder will envelop you protecting you from injury and detriment to your life bar. After several enemy hits it will fade away.

FUSHIN (THE ART OF FLOATING)

When you assume Fushin, your jumps and somersaults have maximum height and distance. It will stay with you until the scene ends, even if you exercise another jitsu.

KARIU (THE ART OF THE FIRE DRAGON)

This jitsu will surround you in a column of fire, which then splits and travels scorching every enemy it touches. It is over when the columns disappear.

MIJIN (THE ART OF PULVERISING)

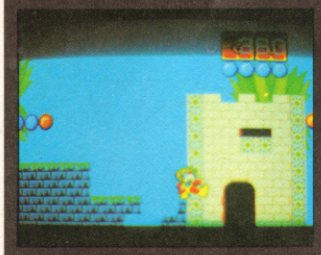
This will turn you into a human explosion, destroying everything in its blast. Unfortunately it will also destroy you, so make sure you have a life in reserve. Used only as a last resort.

ALEX KIDD IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE

SEGA ■ ARCADE ACTION

Being an old hand at losing his dad, Julian Boardman helps Alex Kidd search for his

Poor old King Thor. There he was polishing his grapes when all of a sudden he gets kiddnapped (sic) and carried off to the planet Paperock by its ruler Ashra. Fortunately, the king's son is Alex Kidd, hero and saviour of many a previous Sega adventure. When news reaches



young Alex, he packs up his old kit bag and races off to Paperock. What a son.

Things ain't gonna be easy for Al as the inhabitants of the planet are a weird breed of people. The natives of Paperock are determined to stop him from finding his dad and will engage Alex in numerous games of Paper, Rock, Scissors to waylay him and sap all the money he has collected from punching and kicking the inhabitants senseless. Should he win, however, he will pick up various items like a motorbike or pogo-stick so he can bounce around or do a very good impression of that other motorcycling member of the Kidd family, Eddie.

Enchanted Castle is just as cute, if not more so, than Alex's previous adventures, but all this does is cover up the lack of gameplay. The game soon boils down to a run-of-the-mill beat-'em-up, and even the addition of one of the most ancient games known to man doesn't really help the gameplay, which soon wears thin. It's the kind of game that you wouldn't mind receiving but would think twice about buying.

EAR WE GO!

Alex Kidd has the most amazing pointed ears, but did you know that...

- **Your sense of balance is derived from tiny hairs found in your inner ear.**
- **Ears, like fingerprints, are unique in shape.**
- **96% of babies arrive at times different from those predicted – but that has nothing to do with ears.**

GRAPHICS **65%**
✗ Simple but varied backdrops which add no depth to the game.
✓ Very colourful and cute with some great touches (like crying monkeys).

SOUND **75%**
✗ Sound effects are dull and flat. And the tunes are very Playschool.
✓ However, the odd sampled sound comes as a welcome surprise.

PLAYABILITY **72%**
✗ Uninvolving and ultimately repetitive. Fun exploring though.
✓ Will go down well if successfully pitched at a younger audience.

£29.99 ▼ OUT NOW
MEGA DRIVE
68%

Greedy folk have long arms, short pockets and pointy ears.

RAVE

GHOULS 'N' GHOS

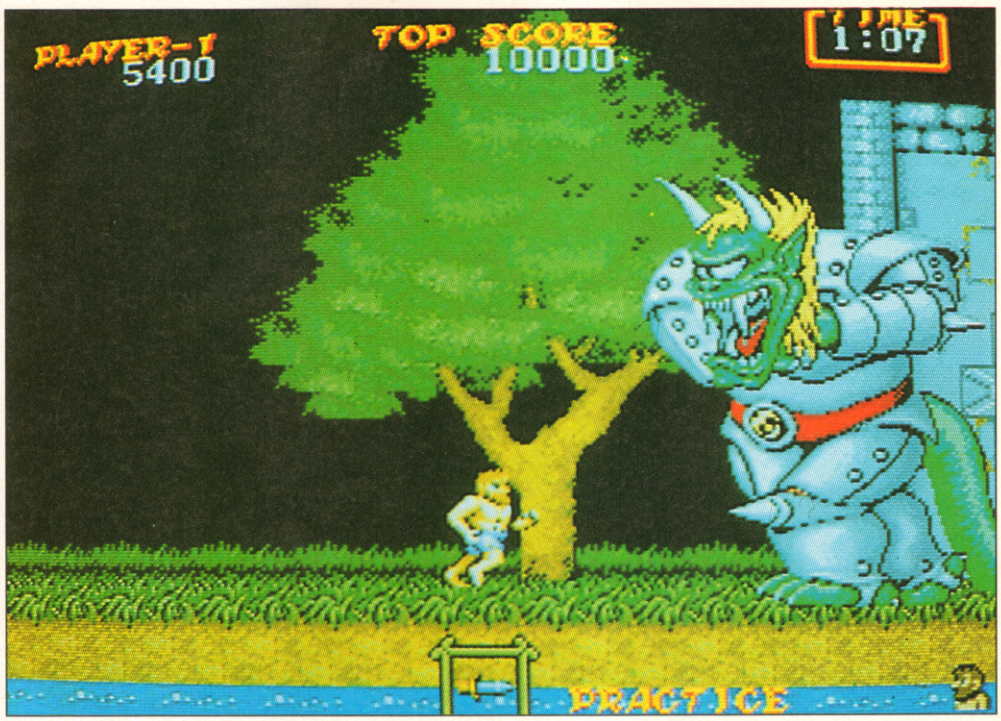
SEGA ■ ARCADE

Julian Boardman looks at the game that put the Mega Drive where it is today

I, perhaps foolishly, took part in a seance the other evening. There I was, waiting in anticipation for a swirling mass of leaves and twigs to come bursting through the French windows, but I was to be unentertained. The only message that came through was one for an old, baggy woman called Mabel, who was most pleased to find that her dear, departed poodle was enjoying life on the other side, unlike her husband Ignatius. But strangely she seemed far more concerned about the dog. (It later transpired that Ignatius had topped himself in an effort to get away from the poodle and finally get some attention himself. He should have stayed where he was because the poodle is now apparently the biggest thing to hit heaven since Tommy Cooper and Eric Morecombe got a double act together.) The second message that came through was one for me, a warning. Oddly it appeared to be from my editor. He's not dead, I thought, still I listened: "Get on with the review or you will be fired, you lout". Uncanny.

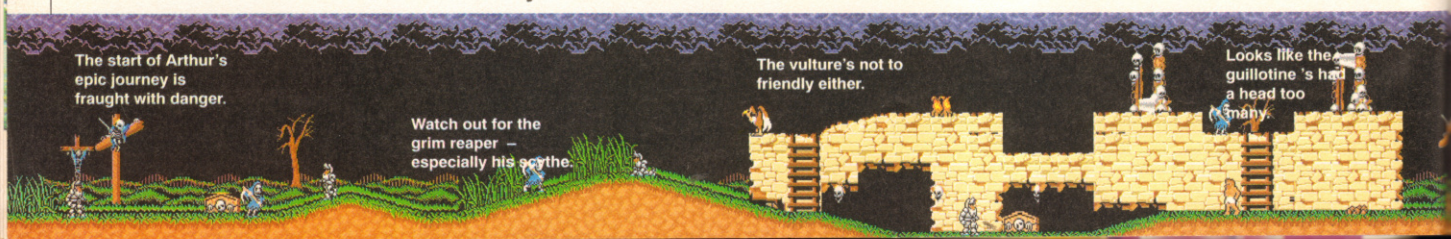
Ghouls 'n' Ghosts has a rather hallowed status in the RAZE office. Not only is it one of the first games any of us played on the Mega Drive (it appeared on grey import over a year ago), it is also one of the most visually impressive.

Poor old King Arthur has had his land raped and his girl pillaged (or something like that) by the Prince of Darkness – unsurprisingly this has left his battered population paralysed with fear. It's up to Arthur to take on the mighty forces of the Prince, tackling each one of them with every ounce of his strength, courage and wit. Arthur must make use of any weapon he can find as he battles against marauding pigs,



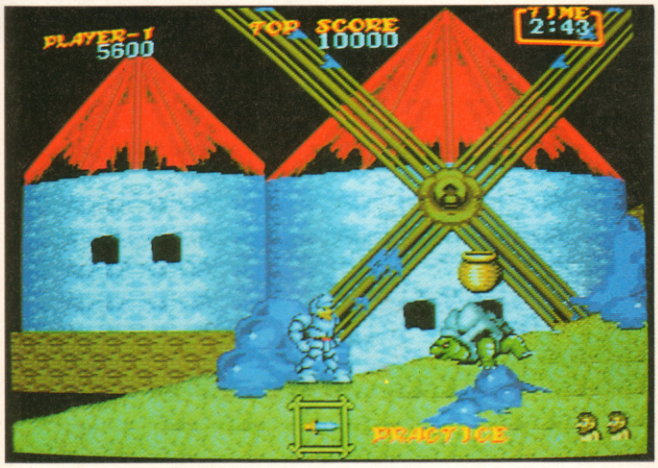
ARTHURIAN TITBITS

- **King Arthur's wife, Guinevere, ran off with the infamous Sir Lancelot.**
- **One of the rumoured sites for Arthur's legendary city of Camelot is situated near Glastonbury Tor in Somerset; just left of Les's flat.**
- **King Arthur's sword was called Excalibur. The weapon was said to have magical powers.**
- **The legendary king's adventures were wonderfully captured in the 1981 film *Excalibur* (which means hard belly!).**



OSTS

plants, and yes, even turtles in the five stages before he can get his gal and vanquish the evil Prince. But even if he does make serious clam chowder out of his opponents, he still has to face up to the terrible whirlwinds, earthquakes and acid-rain that assault his craggy features. Only grim determination and more than a smattering of good fortune will see you, and possibly a second player, through the challenge that awaits you.



Should poor old Arthur get hit though, he will first lose his suit of armour, then on a second hit he will turn into a skeleton, and not surprisingly die. He can collect power-ups from chests that will increase his armour's power or replace it should he be getting a little cold. Also, different weapons can be picked up, but like most multi-weapon jobs certain weapons are far better at creaming that distressingly huge end-of-level guardian than others. So be careful and don't necessarily pick up the first weapon that comes your way, you could cut your fingers.

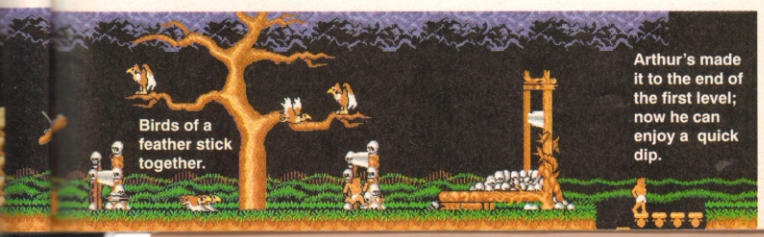
Essentially a hack 'n' slash, but very atmospheric and with enough little surprises and situations that require brain instead of brawn to lift it above your average "axe slayers of the world unite" type game. But at 45 quid I should certainly hope for something a little special.

GRAPHICS **97%**
✓ Some delightful visual effects, including lashing rain and lightning.
✓ An amazing array of detailed and colourful sprites and backgrounds.

SOUND **89%**
✗ While the sounds are undeniably good, none are sampled.
✓ Dominated by 26 atmospheric tunes and loads ofexcellent effects.

PLAYABILITY **95%**
✓ A challenging mix of arcade and strategy. Utterly compleing.
✓ This is one game you won't be discarding after a few hours play.

£44.99 ▼ OUT NOW
MEGA DRIVE
93%



Birds of a feather stick together.

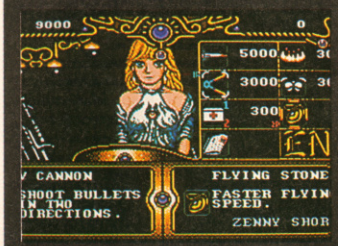
Arthur's made it to the end of the first level; now he can enjoy a quick dip.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

SEGA ■ HORIZONTAL SHOOT-'EM-UP

After forgetting where he lost his dad, Julian Boardman discovers that he's now lost a whole world (ho, hum...)

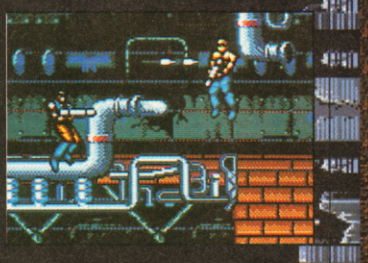
Sometime in the 29th century two nameless men venture onto the Forgotten World, their aim to free it from the slavery of the occupying Reptilian Thugs. The Thugs have desolated the surface of the planet, leaving vast suburban wastelands, harbours full of the repulsive Zipper Worms and everywhere frequented by lizards with more than a long tongue to injure you with.



These two men, raised in secret by the enslaved human beings for just this purpose, have been trained in the skills required to use their powerful weapons to full effect in a combat situation. The weapons have been placed in stores along the way, where they can be bought with the zennies that are collected every time an enemy is shot – the bigger the bad guy the more zennies you get.

Weapons that can be picked up include napalm bombs, homing missiles and lasers, multi-directional fire etc some of which are far more useful than others. I found homing missiles most effective, requiring little more than a flick of the autofire switch to cruise through the whole level.

There is no strategy required at all, and the level of difficulty is almost non-existent. The only fun comes in trying to see how big a weapon you can get hold of. *Forgotten Worlds* should never have been remembered.



GRAPHICS **78%**
✗ Uninspired sprites with a poor use of colour. Dodgey animation too.
✓ Backgrounds add depth and atmosphere.

SOUND **68%**
✗ Familiar dramatic tunes which soon become repetitive.
✓ Decent effects which manage to lift the overall poor sound.

PLAYABILITY **69%**
✗ Far too easy for any long-lasting appeal.
✓ Enjoyable, though, for a quick blast to relieve tension and stress.

£34.99 ▼ OUT NOW
MEGA DRIVE
72%

RAVE

GOLDEN AXE

SEGA ■ ARCADE BEAT-'EM-UP

Les Ellis swaps pen for axe and gives everyone the chop

A dark time has befallen the once peaceful land of Yuria. The armies of Death Adder have invaded and taken control of every village, massacring thousands of innocent people. The evil overlord has kidnapped the King of Yuria along with his beautiful, nubile, nymph-like etc daughter, the princess. Also – shock, horror – he has nabbed the all-powerful Golden Axe, from which the kingdom gains all its power. Now Death Adder (no relation to Black Adder) heads the most powerful army in the kingdom.

From the carnage of their flattened kingdom rise three brave warriors, vowing to rid the kingdom of its oppressor. There's Ax-Battler, the courageous barbarian with immense strength; Tyris-Flare, a young Amazonian lady with lethal magic and lightning fast swordplay; and Gilius-Thunderhead, a dwarf whose clever bag of tricks and large chopper can defeat even the largest of foes. Along with an amazing array of moves, each warrior possesses their own special move. The dwarf carries a flying head butt, the barbarian has a lethal shoulder barge, and the slender curves of the dark skinned jungle lady can exert a frighteningly dangerous flying kick.

One or two players can take part, with each choosing their own character. The traveller(s) must walk along eight levels of constantly changing drops, where the Death Adder's minions protect the path to his domain. You must dispose of these with either huge sweeps of your warrior's weapon or any number of complex moves, like body slams, shin kicks and head butts.

Occasionally, you'll encounter small elves carrying tiny pots. If you repeatedly bash these little blighters they'll throw out extra energy and magic potions. Later on in the level these little pots of power will come in useful when trying to defeat the

Tyris-Flame is about to decapitate her man while the dwarf practises his American wrestling moves.

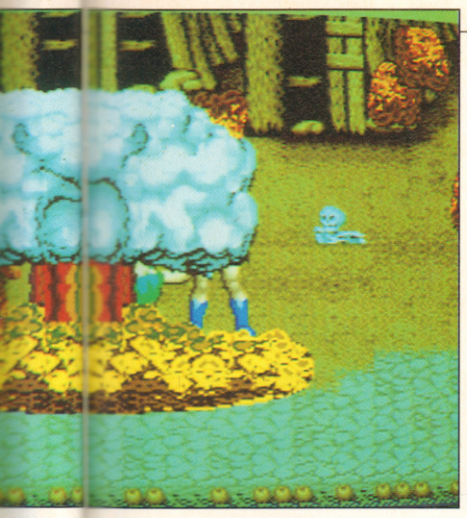
Pick your representative for the quest to kill Death Adder.

Weeee... Ax-Battler throws some magic in the air.

THE VARIOUS STAGES OF BATTLE

STAGE 1: In the Woods	Here you will meet the dumbest of the soldiers – lots of them! You'll also come face to face with the Twin Brutes and the Lizard Women. Grab as much magic as you can.
STAGE 2: Turtle Village	After scaring away all the kids, the armies await your arrival. The soldiers are much tougher than before, and you'll come face to face with your first Bizarrian.
STAGE 3: The Crossing	Get across the bridge to reach the mainland. Tread carefully as it's a long way down...
STAGE 4: To Eagle Island	The island is on the back of a rather large eagle. Watch out for those skulls and narrow bridges.
STAGE 5: To the Palace	Fighting on cobblestone streets against Lizard Women. More soldiers and more Bizarrians.
STAGE 6: The Palace Gates	Speed is needed here as Death Adder waits by the gates, throwing out sparks of electricity.
STAGE 7: The Dungeon	Skeletons infest this dark cellar full of broken floor boards and even darker pits.
STAGE 8: The Battle	Your final encounter against Death Adder. And has he got a surprise for you! Not only does he have a massive golden axe, but also magic and a couple skeletons to help him.

Every hero becomes a bore eventually.



numerous big guys.

Also coming in pretty useful are the Bizarrians, which gallop onto the screen under the control of one of Death Adder's cronies. If you manage to knock the guy off his ride, you can steal the Bizarrian and use it for your own purposes. Be careful, though, the Bizarrians have deadly swinging tails and a hot 'n' fiery throat that's in dire need of some Amplex.

The game comes with many modes of play. The arcade mode is the original version, and takes the adventure over five days. While the beginner mode is an easier short version of the game which ends at level three after a battle with Death Adder Jnr. In one-player mode, the duel section pits you against 12 of Death Adder's soldiers. In two-player mode, the duel action puts both players face to face, fighting to the death.

A player can start the game with between three and five energy blocks, with two continues available on the two-player game and three for the single player.

GRAPHICS **94%**

✓ Superbly detailed backdrops, sprites and animation.
✓ Smooth movement and scrolling despite the size of the sprites.

SOUND **89%**

✓ Wonderful selection of grunts, groans, thwacks and blaps.
✓ Excellent rhythmic tune bops in the background.

PLAYABILITY **97%**

✓ Enthralling gameplay from the start. Oozes with addictive action.
✓ One of the best – especially in simultaneous two-plater mode.

£34.99 ▼ OUT NOW

MEGA DRIVE

92%

MEET THE BIZARRIANS

Here are the Bizarrians. Knock off their riders, mount them and then firing will either make their mighty tails spin or their mouths spit fireballs.

The dwarf hitches a ride on a Bizarrian while Tyris-Flare gets the hell out of there.

SPACE HARRIER II

SEGA ■ SHOOT-'EM-UP

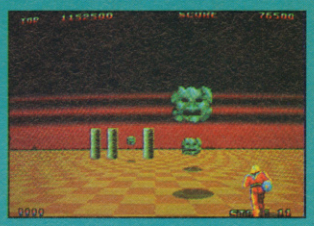
Julian Boardman tilts the chair, while Les Ellis goes a-blasting

When Elite announced that they were releasing a home computer version of the arcade hit Space Harrier, no-one believed they could pull it off. But they went on to produce quite a creditable collection of conversions, despite the absence of the infamous hydraulic chair. And the arcade game was so successful that it went on to spawn a sequel, thoughtfully titled *Space Harrier II*.

Zooming over 4000 years into the future, to the year 6236, you find yourself in trouble yet again. While chewing on a tech-burger and sipping a Coke, you pick up a stray distress signal on your wave-tracer. On further investigation, you discover that the signal originates from sector 214, known as the Fantasyland. A call like this from such a peaceful sector doesn't go unanswered in these parts, so you grab your laser and head for the nearest cosmic gate.

On arrival you can see that something is drastically wrong with Fantasyland. You barely recognise the once beautiful landscape, but the alien hordes that now inhabit it are all too familiar.

There are 12 stages to Fantasyland, each accessible by defeating a monster on the previous level. The levels range from the easy Stuna area to the Hot Palace. All are made up of numerous alien waves, and the landscape scattered with the trees, bushes and pillars so prevalent in the original. So grab yer blasting this ride's gonna be a rough one.



■ Flying rock cakes attack in Space Harrier II.

GRAPHICS **93%**

✗ Simple but effective backdrop – just a scrolling square pattern.
✓ Super sprites, intricately drawn and smoothly animated.

SOUND **69%**

✓ Satisfying explosion, laser and collision effects plus cracking tune.
✓ Brilliant digitised scream as you die and even better 'get ready'.

PLAYABILITY **90%**

✓ Probably the best version you can get; highly addictive.
✓ Friendly feature lets you start on any of the 12 stages available.

£34.99 ▼ OUT NOW

MEGA DRIVE

60%

■ Battletech lives on. Have we seen these somewhere before?

180
150
120
LOCK ON 100
FIRE
EUROPE
3/1
TIME 1:58
SPEED98K
121080

The ONLY OFFICIAL
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CHECK 'EM OUT

Four more Mega Drive monsters to get your mits on

SUPER HANG-ON
SEGA ■
RACING SIMULATION

Direct from the Sega arcade machine, complete with all the features that made it such a hit. There are two games to play: the normal arcade racing, and a section where you race for money and buy parts for your bike.

The arcade section has already been translated onto the computer versions of *Super Hang-On* and is probably the best arcade racing game you'll get. The Mega Drive version is certainly as good as the Amiga version, and comes with the added bonus of the "serious" section. The second part allows you to race against seven other bikers around tracks of the world making money by winning races. The winnings can then be spent on your bike, improving it by adding extra body work, a bigger engine, better tyres etc. This is the best game of the two and bumps the lastability up.

Super Hang-On's been a classic for years. In its latest incarnation it has become an essential addition for all racing game lovers.

£34.99 ▼ OUT NOW
MEGA DRIVE
74%

ZOOM!
SEGA ■ PAINTER

If you like your games cute and cuddly, then look no further than *Zoom!*. It's basically a *Painter* game but with one or two enhancements. You play Mr Smart and have to skate around a grid, known as the force field, stealing squares from phantoms. This is achieved by the familiar method of surrounding each square with the trail that's left when you walk about.

Various phantoms chase you around the grid, but these can be avoided by jumping over them or firing rubber balls from your backside (!).

The game can be played with one or two players. Two players can either take it in turns or both compete at the same time on one grid. The game has six stages with six force fields to clear in each stage.

This game just oozes cuteness, from the lovable main character to the juicy bits of fruit that can be picked up. One drawback, however, is the poor control method which is very frustrating for novices. Admittedly, the manual does acknowledge the fact, stating that "Zoom's middle name is Patience". But considering the Mega Drive's high asking price for its games, you expect a bit more than a rehash of a dated formula.

£29.99 ▼ OUT NOW
MEGA DRIVE
67%

SUPER THUNDER BLADE
SEGA ■
CHOPPER-'EM-UP

Ever wanted to rescue the free world from the onslaught of a military force hellbent on taking over? What do you mean, you've never really thought about it! It's quite plausible that one person in a chopper filled to the brim with high-tech computer systems and top secret weaponry could defeat the whole might of an assembled force of Middle East madmen. Or so the *Super Thunder Blade* story goes...

The game is viewed from two perspectives and split into two defined areas. You start playing with a view from behind the tail rotor of your chopper, swaying from left to right in a brave attempt to avoid the oncoming tower blocks. Tanks patrol the streets below you and can be taken out with AATM missiles, while the Hinds and MiGs which approach you can be downed with a short burst from the Gatling gun.

Soon you'll come up against a massive tank that fills the screen. While your chopper hovers you must use all weaponry available to blast the sucker. On destruction of this, the action switches 90 degrees with you viewing your chopper from above the rotor blade, watching the canyons below sweep by.

There are four basic stages, split into varying sub-stages containing massive tanks, aircraft carriers, etc. The ridiculously high scoring rate and three difficulties levels will keep you coming back for more. Like the other games reviewed though, the asking price is a bit high for such an old game.

£34.95 ▼ OUT NOW
MEGA DRIVE
75%

RAMBO III
SEGA ■
SHOOT-'EM-UP

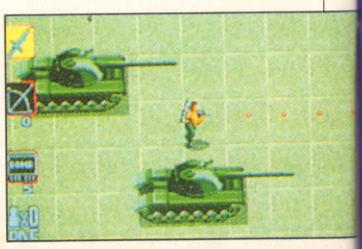
He's your worst nightmare. No, not Julian Boardman's dietitian, but Rambo! The Mega Drive version is based closely around the film starring Sylvester Stallone.

Rambo's good buddy Colonel Trautman has been captured by the Commies and is being held somewhere in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan. Rambo has been sent in to rescue his old Nam friend from the brutal Russian interrogation which he is undergoing.

Rambo's mission is split into six stages. He must infiltrate enemy lines; rescue a secret agent (who knows the whereabouts of Trautman); get to the arsenal; destroy the enemy's weapons (causing a distraction); penetrate the fortress; and rescue Colonel Trautman. The main stages are completed *Commando*-style, with Rambo running around the place shooting, knifing, bombing, and firing explosives arrows from his bow. At the end of stages one, three, five and six you come up against an enemy helicopter. By positioning the crosshairs on the chopper and firing an explosive arrow, you can gain a large bonus and continue to the next stage.

Like the film, the game is total mayhem. But unlike the film, you'll find the computer game keeps you addicted for more than 101 minutes.

£34.95 ▼ OUT NOW
MEGA DRIVE
80%



TAKE PART IN THE SEGA SENSATION

★ SEGA MEGA DRIVE ★ SEGA MASTER SYSTEM
★ T-SHIRTS, WATCHES, SPORTS BAGS, HATS, BUM BAGS

WIN! WIN! WIN!

The Sega Sensation – as they say – is sweeping the nation. You can't walk into an electrical shop without tripping over some sort of Sega hardware. The sultry packaging, sleek black curves of the hardware, flashing screens, pounding soundtracks – ooh, what a sexy machine.

Now that the Mega Drive has joined the Master System in the official Sega/Virgin distribution chain there's no excuse not to get one of these top-selling consoles. Even more so now that RAZE and Virgin are getting together to give away some top-notch console hardware and Sega goodies.

There's a super Sega Mega Drive for the first postcard out of the sack, second prize is a Master System and the third and fourth entries to be drawn get a Sega goodies bag. Inside the bag, you get a Sega T-shirt, Sega watch, Sega sports bag, Sega hat, Sega bum bag... you get the idea.

Just answer the three questions, fill out the form (including your New Year's resolution), and send the coupon off to:
SEGA PUDDING COMPETITION, RAZE MAGAZINE, UNIT 3, 7 BACK STREET, TROWBRIDGE, WILTSHIRE BA14 8LH.

Get those entries in by December 31st. Anything after that will be set on fire by the Mickey Mouse Christmas lights.

1. What is the Mega Drive's country of origin?
A Iceland
B America
C Japan

2. Which of the following is available on the Mega Drive?
A Ghouls 'n' Ghosts
B Ghosts 'n' Goblins
C Grannies 'n' Gobstoppers

3. Phone 0898 555080 and listen to the final question.

0898 competition calls are charged at 33p per minute (off peak) and 44p per minute (normal). The message will be about two minutes long, so check with the person who pays the bill BEFORE you pick up the phone.

DON'T MISS OUT

Sega's Master System was the first console to make an impression on the previously computer-oriented UK home entertainment market. Sega expect to sell 600,000 Master Systems in Europe this Christmas, make sure you get yours.

Your Personal Voucher Card, stuck to the front of the first issue, is your passport to not only Sega goodies, but also equally seductive competition prizes and special offers. Just quote your PVC number in the return coupon and you're in with a chance. What's more, look at the RAZE CRAVE pages for very special price-tumbling discount on consoles and games. Your PVC is the key to total games action.

SALACIOUS SEGA SPECTACULAR

I do believe that the following information is correct. However, if I am proved wrong, I will be mightily annoyed, so watch your backs Ravers.

1 a ☐ b ☐ c ☐ 2 a ☐ b ☐ c ☐ 3 a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

My New Year's resolution is .....

.....

My PVC number is: .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Postcode: .....

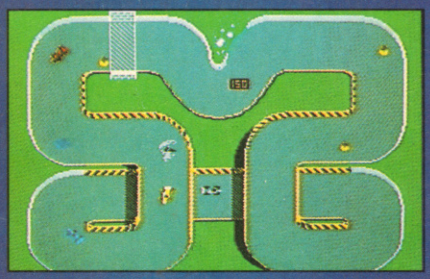
RAVE

SUPER SPRINT

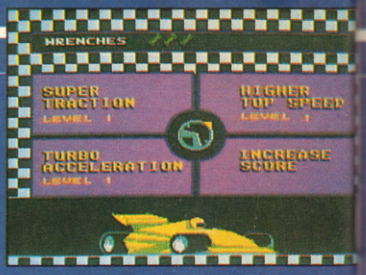
TENGEN ■ ARCADE DRIVING

Julian Boardman learns a new word: "sprint"

I could quite handle being one of those really famous racing drivers, untold millions to squander on fast women and loose trousers, or is that loose women and fast trousers? All this and more for sweating buckets for two hours on a Sunday afternoon, before bunking off and letting the YTS oiks repair the car as you take in the glorious sights of whatever exotic place you happen to be in. What a life!



Super Sprint consists of seven different tracks each progressively more difficult than the last, more twists, tighter turns etc. You race against three computer-controlled cars, or two computer and one friend, amassing points and collecting spanners (or wrenches), as you try to be the first to complete five laps and go on to the next round. Two spanners allows you to improve one of the three features of your car – acceleration, traction and top speed – by one unit, up to a maximum of six. Once these are full the only option left is to increase the totally irrelevant score – the RAZE office found it far more important to get further than score higher.



Obviously, driving round seven tracks could soon get pretty boring, so various obstacles get introduced along the way. There are oil and mud which send you into a spin, puddles and cones that slow you down, strange hydraulic pillars that rise out of the tarmac (?) to arrest your speedy progress around the track, and, of course, localised tornados. Any one of these obstacles could change the fortunes of any one of the four cars in the race, or even all of them at once if there's a massive pile up.

The computer-controlled cars also get progressively better, spending their spanners just as you do to improve their car. The thing is that they can drive infinitely better than you ever could (they don't hit the walls) so it eventually becomes a real challenge to keep going through the tracks – if you don't come first you don't qualify for the next race.

This is where tactics come in. A tactic developed by us is the idea that one player drives to win, whilst the other sacrifices his place to take out the two opposition cars, sending them the wrong way and generally waylaying them so that a definite progression can be made to the next level.

What really is a shame is that Nintendo's legal wrangle with Tengen means that this game will only ever be available on import, which is a pity as it's extremely enjoyable.

Super Sprint couldn't fail to impress because of three reasons: its speed, the competitive edge which leads to some serious late night joypad bashing, and the opportunity for some mindless brutality. What more could be asked from any game?

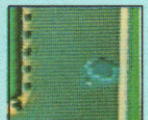
Phenomenally addictive gameplay.

£34.99 ▼ IMPORT

NES

92%

IMPORT



WATER PUDDLE
Slows you down without losing control.

OIL SLICK
Spins your car 360 degrees.

THE TORNADO
This is like a moving oil slick – it will spin your car 360 degrees.

MUD PUDDLE
Spins your car 360 degrees and causes you to slow down.

EXPLODING CONES
As you hit the cones, they explode and disappear, causing you to slow down. Cones slow you down more than water puddles and mud puddles.

HYDRAULIC POLES
These poles rise up from the track to obstruct your safe passage. They alternate going up and down, and only one pole will be up at a time.

HM CUSTOMS Special

Les "mond" Ellis dances with the devil and risks some gnarly Nintendo imports

GAUNTLET

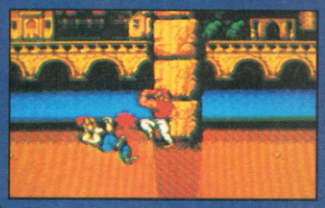
TENGEN ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

This game has probably been converted to just about every format there is. You play one of four characters and must explore over 90 levels in search of the sacred orb. A password feature saves repetitive play so longterm addiction is increased. You've probably played the game somewhere else, so the Nintendo version isn't likely to excite.

£34.95 ▼ IMPORT
NES
70%

BAD DUDES

DATA EAST ■ BEAT-'EM-UP



Forget all the technical moves that appear in other martial arts games, just kick and punch your way through the waves of blood-crazed ninjas in your search for the President. Yeah, that's right, the guy's been kidnapped by some Dragon Ninja character. Arcade bone-crunching fighting action from beginning to end. A wide range of backgrounds with good use of colour. Plenty of content ensures a real challenge for arcadesters.
Challenging but dated beat-'em-up fun.

£39.95 ▼ IMPORT
NES
83%

DOUBLE DRAGON

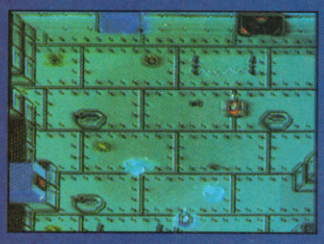
TRADE WEST ■ BEAT-'EM-UP

Preferable to *Bad Dudes*, even though the UK cart conversion means you get a screen flicker every time the play area scrolls. Good fighting scenes are enhanced by some hilarious manoeuvres, like grabbing your opponent by the hair and kneeing him in the face – nice subtle move. Great definition and animation of the characters and objects make it worthy of RAZE reader purchase. The two-player man-to-man option adds value to this enthralling package.

£39.95 ▼ IMPORT
NES
89%

VINDICATORS

TENGEN ■ VERTICAL SHOOT-'EM-UP



This simultaneous two-player tank-blasting game first appeared in 1988 and has not lost anything through time. The power-ups can turn your tank into an immense killing machine. A good game in one-player mode – an incredible game in two-player mode.
If you've no friends don't buy it.

£39.95 ▼ IMPORT
NES
65%

BATMAN

SUNSOFT ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

Considering the PC Engine is one of the best-selling consoles in the world, it's quite strange that it should be the absolute last machine to receive a conversion of the immensely popular *Batman*. But forget all other versions, the PC Engine version gives the game a whole new perspective.

The action if viewed from above, with forced 3-D perspective (a bit like *Trashman* on the Spectrum, if you can remember that far back). Batman scurries around the maze-like corridors, picking up various items, but ultimately trying to get the ingredients for the Joker's Smilex lotion.

Level one, the Axis Chemical Factory, contains 12 separate stages, each occupied by the Joker's own special brand of henchman. The minions can either be dispatched with a clip round the ear from your batarang or a bat-bomb which will "smart" all on screen. Once hit the guys spin into a frenzy, during this you can touch them which sends them flying off the screen (surreal).

The second level takes place in the Fugelheim museum where you must remove the Joker's graffiti from all of the paintings. The second level gets the addition of special transporters which "hyperspace" you to other locations in the museum.

The action continues to the last set of rooms in Gotham Cathedral where Bats must... well, that would be giving it away. Play for yourself.

Poor presentation and repetitive gameplay.

£29.95 ▼ IMPORT
PC ENGINE
69%

IMPORT BUYS

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■ Console Concepts, Unit 18, The Village Shopping Centre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stafordshire ST5 1QB. Tel: (0782) 712759.

■ Console Quest, 1 Ashacre Mews, Offington, Worthing, West Sussex BN13 2DE. Tel: (0903) 63786.

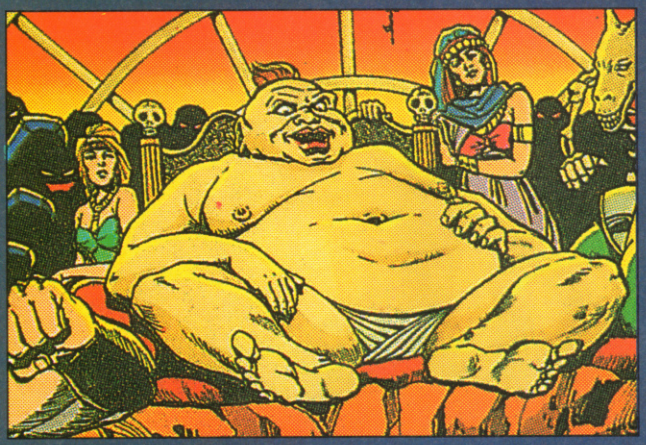
■ Medlantic, 30 Church Street, Market Bosworth, Warickshire CV13 0LG. Tel: (0455) 291865.

For NES *Bad Dudes*, *Double Dragon*, *Gauntlet*, *Super Sprint*, and *Vindicators* contact:

■ Unitec Systems, 8 James Street, Helensburgh G84 8AS. Tel: (0436) 79123.

FATMAN

SANRITSU ■ BEAT-'EM-UP



What? Jokes about Jools and the Fatman being one and the same guy? Nah, I wouldn't stoop to such depths to fill my reviews. In fact, the main character of the game is quite a slim little nipper if you ask me. There he stands, rippling muscles and cycling shorts, just waiting to be challenged. Which, of course, he is, by none other than Jools, er, the fat lord Mondy.

The Fatman has invited slim Jim to the Fight Palace, the place where the local tough guys prove their worth. But it's not just as easy as just beating up a few strangers. You have to capture the soul of all the fighters you encounter too!

You have at your disposal various moves that you can use to attack your opponents. There are kicks, flying kicks, punches, leg sweeps and so on.

For each bout a bounty is awarded to the victor (you, hopefully). This money can be spent on building up Jim, replacing lost energy. Between fights, special powers can be bought to confuse and defeat the enemy. These powers vary from *fade*, which will make you disappear, and *bees* which attack your opponent to *slow* which, here's a surprise, slows down your opponent.

Your challengers are a selection of the ugliest bunch of renegades you could imagine. There's Rex, the blue warrior; Edwina, who was banished to the palace for condemning eggs(!); Guano, the farting lizard; Bonapart, a skeleton; Robochic, the sexiest droid ever to blow a sprocket; Stump, who has no legs, and some other weirdos.

Each opponent requires different tactics, so you won't be completing the game overnight. You'll need mental and physical precision and total control of all your limbs. Have you got what it takes?

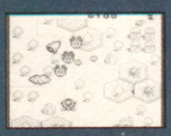
A novel beat-'em-up with great graphics

£35.00 ▼ IMPORT

MEGA DRIVE

89%

Import software is now flooding in for the Game Boy. Here's the latest little masterpiece, Twin Bee.



A great little shoot 'em-up with super characters.

£24.99 ▼ IMPORT

GAME BOY

88%

TWIN BEE

KONAMI ■ VERTICAL SHOOT-'EM-UP

After the success of *Bomber Bob* on the 16-bits last issue, Game Boy owners can rejoice as they get their own little version, albeit under a different guise.

You play the role of an airborne attacker who must fly over enemy terrain destroying ground targets with bombs. On destruction the bases release a piece of fruit or some other bonus icon.

Unfortunately, the ground targets are not the only ones to worry about. Flying towards you at great speed are squadrons of enemy aircraft. Also flying down the screen are clouds and bubbles which you can shoot with you nose-mounted gun to reveal bonus bells. Collect these and you are awarded points or some extra bonus which could increase the power of or even change your weapon.

Once through this barrage of enemy fire there is (wait for it) an end of level guardian to deal with – and considering the size of the Game Boy screen it's a bloody big one!

There are five levels in all, increasing in difficulty as the alien waves get more complex and the ships more intelligent. Five may not sound like a lot to conquer, but the content of each level should keep any respectable player occupied for weeks.

BURNING FORCE

NAMCOT ■ SHOOT-'EM-UP

Ever been burned up by some boy racer sneaking up from behind and zooming past. Women probably get hassled more than most, and it's this that has really riled young Hiromi, a Japanese teenager. So she decided it was time to fight back. After many months searching, she found what she had been looking for: a shiny red, turbo-charged, armed jetbike. Just the job for burning off the boy racers.

But such things should be put to better use than just racing around town. One day the intergalactic police approached Hiromi to hire her undoubted driving skills. The centre of Metro City has become a haven for scum, hordes of criminals roam the streets, the police powerless against the sort of fire power that has fallen into the criminals' hands. You have six days to reclaim the centre.

Still lying around the streets are weapons and energy packs left over by the police before they deserted the area. If you can pick these up they are sure help your cause. Luckily all the weapons are compatible with your bike, so there should be no problem ridding the city of these deviants.

At the end of each day you can return to the police central HQ, where they'll repair your bike for free. Each day you'll enter a different sector, and each one is ruled by one all-powerful overlord. Sod's Law that you'll encounter this tough guy at the end of the day, after battling a million other evil-doers. Luckily. the police have details on all these powermongers, and you'll get information on their weak points before you leave each day.

And on the seventh day you can rest...

Flying against the boss man at the end of level one.

Spraying red paint confuses the enemy, or is it that they're just blowing up.

Space Harrier is too old a formula to be successful nowadays.

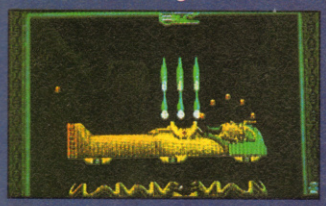
£35.00 ▼ IMPORT
MEGA DRIVE
77%

HELLFIRE

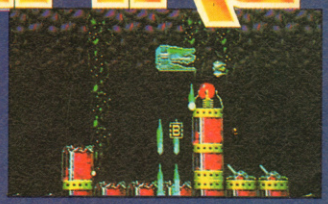
MASNA ■ HORIZONTAL SHOOT-'EM-UP

What's this? Cor, the Japanese are just so-o-o-o original. Where do they pull these games from?

In this one you have control of a ship and fly through various scenes shooting and blasting flying ships and ground-based attack craft. Getting excited now?



Diagonal fire will deal with these flat-headed walking monstrosities.



Let sleeping pharaohs lie on level two.

Shooting some of them reveals icons but wait, what's this, they do not give you new weapons. No sir, your ship already has four interchangeable guns! Those power-ups just increase the intensity of the weapons. Also "just floating in space" are smart bombs, probably left over from some Space Age nuclear dump. These explosive devices don't come along too often so it's better if you use them sparingly.

At the end of each level you meet Prince Charles who gives you a lecture on the pro and cons of outside toilets.

Actually, I lied about the last bit...

Level three continues the frenetic action in *Hellfire*.

In fact, it's an incredibly addictive shoot-'em-up.

£35.00 ▼ IMPORT
MEGA DRIVE
82%

IMPORT BUYS

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For NES *Bad Dudes*, *Double Dragon*, *Gauntlet*, *Super Sprint*, and *Vindicators* contact:

■ Unitec Systems, 8 James Street, Helensburgh G84 8AS. Tel: (0436) 79123.

HANDS UP

Open your hands and count your fingers – lots aren't there. Well that's nothing compared to the wealth of hand held LCD games consoles which range in price from£20 to well over £200. Andrew Banner waves his hands in the air like he just don't care.

KONAMI LCDs

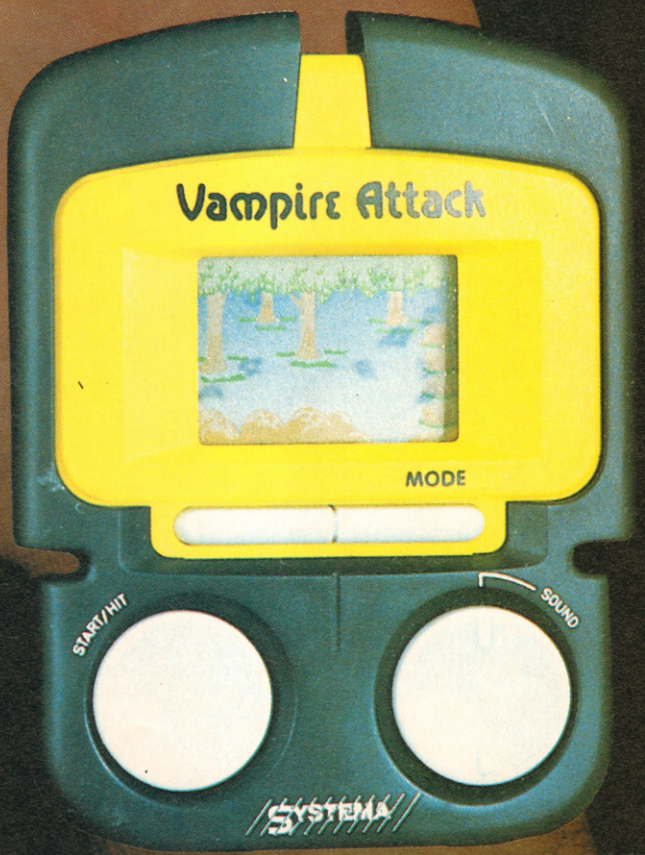
PRICE: £20.99
AVAILABLE: High street, mail order

The Konami range of LCD games is relatively new to the UK. Thanks to Hornby, these units appeared in the shop in early 1990 with the emphasis firmly on the *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles* game. Other games include *Top Gun*, *Skate or die*, *Gradius*, *Double Dribble* and *C*. All the Konami range are housed in the same style of case. This casing is the most ergonomic of all the hand held games in this article. They are easy to hold and sit comfortably in the grip of both palms. The two large control pads are operated by your thumbs. The left button is the movement control (two or four directions depending on the game) and the right is a fire button. Each game is powered by two AA size 1.5v cells which are not supplied with the units.

SYSTEMA SYSTEMS

PRICE: Below £20
AVAILABLE: Argos, certain high street retailers, catalogue companies

Systema have a large range of products ranging from education toys to sports simulations and electronic board and card games. The majority of action games are of the single screen variety though there are three double screen versions which add to the gameplay. Many of the games use relatively small screens and this obviously restricts the size of the graphics. Again, colour is facilitated by printing behind the LCD and so does not change. Power is supplied by single Varta V13GA and equivalent batteries single batteries which are supplied ready installed. All of the action games sell for pocket money prices and represent excellent value for money. For instance, *Hero and Princess* (circa £12.99) and *Vampire Attack* (typically £6.99).



TOMY LCDs

PRICE: £25.99
AVAILABLE: Argos, high street retailers, mail order

Tomytronic's range of games are unique. The design of these ingenious games is such that you don't actually look at them, you look into them. There are two eye cups positioned on one end of the unit and you peer through as though they were binoculars. There are even straps so you can hang it around your neck. Inside you get an image projection into each eyepiece to provide a pseudo 3-D scene. The controls are located on the top of the unit. These games require a certain amount of light to work as well. They're not solar powered though, but they do need light to illuminate the screen. I'll explain. The Tomytronic games are colour. They work using LCD displays which, unlike all the other games in this article, are initially positive (black). The images are made by stencilling out the images from the black LCD which then lets the light through a coloured translucent panel and the final image is projected through the two eyepieces. Each game is powered by three AA size batteries which are not supplied. Machines available include *Thundering Turbos*, *Shark Attack* and *Sky Attack*.

GRAND-STAND GAMES

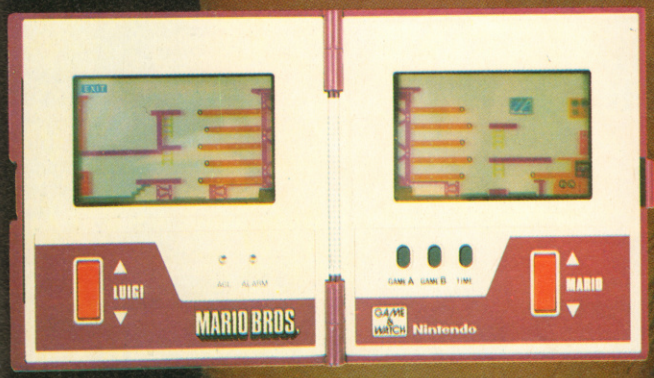
PRICE: £24.99
AVAILABLE: Argos, high street retailers, catalogue companies

These lot have been around for years, but it's only recently that the company has managed to sign up major deals with coin-op giants Sega to produce hand held conversions of top arcade games. The new range for this Christmas includes *Out Run*, *Afterburner*, *Hang On*, *Altered Beast*, *Thunderblade*, *Golden Axe* and *Shinobi*. Other licences include *Batman*, *Paperboy* and *Double Dragon*. Each game is powered by two AA size 1.5v batteries and two Duracells are included.

NINTENDO GAME & WATCH

Price: £19.99 (single screen), £24.99 (double screen)
Available: Argos, high street retailers

Nintendo was one of the original companies responsible for the muffled beeping rising from secondary school classrooms. The company produces 22 Liquid Crystal games, 11 single screen versions and 11 double. The double screen games fold over to protect the LCD. Like all of the other games in this pocket category, colour is only available as permanent printing on a layer behind the LCD and therefore does not change. Graphics are purely monochrome. Each unit is powered by two SR or LR44 1.5v cells which are supplied but not fitted. The games also double up as watches with an alarm signal. Machines worth getting include *Mario Bros* and *Zelda*.



You've played the single-game LCD hand-helds. Now get to grips with the numerous cartridge-based consoles available.

NINTENDO GAME BOY

PRICE: £69.99
AVAILABLE: High street retailers, mail order

Nintendo started the hand-held console rage with their very portable Game Boy. Although the console only has a black and white 160 by 144 dot-matrix LCD screen, there are a huge range of immensely playable titles around. Games like *Nemesis, Tetris, Super Marioland, Batman, Paperboy,* and Teenage *Mutant Hero Turtles* ensure that once picked up, never put down. Games cost around £20, although up-to-date grey imports can cost more.

SEGA GAME GEAR

PRICE: N/A
AVAILABLE: Virgin (from Spring next year), grey importers (now)

Featured last month in Shintaro's Big in Japan column, the Game Gear has just been launched in the East. The console cost the equivalent of £80 in Japan. Virgin will distribute the

machine in the UK from spring next year, and are reckoning on a price between £100 and £130. If you can't wait until then the Game Gear is available from various grey importers priced around £200. The machine features a 4096-colour palette and allows up to 32 colours onscreen simultaneously. Games already available include *Super Monaco GP, Columns* and *Pongo.*

ATARI LYNX

PRICE: £179.99
AVAILABLE: Atari (0753) 333444, high street retailers, mail order

The first ever colour hand-held machine. Pricey, but worth it when you see the superb finishing. The Lynx features a four-channel sound chip, 4096-colour palette and 160 by 102 resolution. Its backlit LCD screen is very sharp. Around 10 titles – including *Klax, Paperboy, Gates of Zendocon, Slimeworld* and *Gauntlet III* – will be available by the time you read this. Many others are expected during the coming year. Games, which cost around £30, are available as plug-in cartridges.

NEC PC ENGINE GT

PRICE: N/A
AVAILABLE: Grey importers
Arguably the hottest new release in Japan. The GT is a colour hand-held console similar in size and shape to the Game Boy. It costs a lot in Japan – £172-plus – but runs all PC Engine and Super Grafx games. A TV tuner can be added to the system at extra cost. NEC have no plans to release the console in the UK at present, so you'll have to put up with grey import prices. Expect to pay a minimum of £250. There are over 100 game titles to choose from due to the Engine's huge success in Japan.

A Game Boy in the hand is worth two in the bush.

THE 1990 ATARI ST PRODUCT GUIDE

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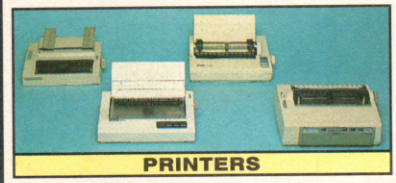
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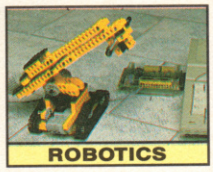
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DR ZAK'S HACKS & STACKS

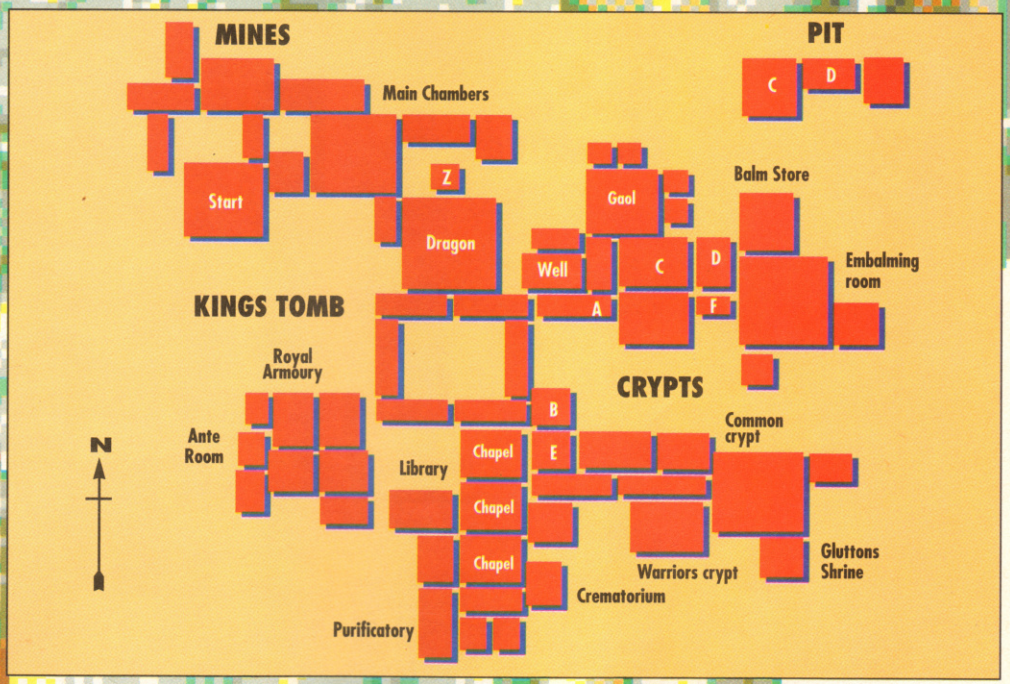
CADAVER

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO LEVEL ONE

The Bitmap Brothers' fine arcade adventure gets a Zak Attack and reveals all to RAZE readers. I hope all you sad gamers out there who couldn't complete level one appreciate the hard work that went into this. You should be eternally grateful to Philip Wilcock of the Bitmap Brothers – and Zak, of course!

Karadoc starts in the old mine workings and is seeking the route up to the next level in the castle...

1. First room: collect the pickaxe, coin and diary, exit via the north door.
2. Pull lever to unlock the north door. Exit north.
3. Collect sack of stones (weapon), exit west.
4. Kill creature, collect charm, exit south.
5. Collect runes, kill spider, exit north.
6. Exit north, exit north.
7. Move the sacks to reveal a gem, collect the gem, kill the maggot, exit south.
8. Exit east, exit east, exit south into the main chamber.
9. Collect the rope, kill worm, exit east, exit east.
10. Collect key, return to start room.
11. From start room, exit east, pull lever (unlocks main chamber south door), open chest for clue about gems in csase it was missed.
12. Return to main chamber, kill/avoid worm, exit south.
13. Throw pickaxe at wall until it is low enough to jump or demolished, exit south.
14. Search the skeleton for clue book, exit east.
15. Buttons unlock the Dragon Room, combination: 1432, lefthand button equals one. This can be used later, at the moment you are not strong enough to defeat the Dragon. Exit east.
16. Map point A, exit north exit west into the well.
17. Take key hidden under the bones, beware sea monster, exit east.
18. Exit west into the store, open chest, collect coin, chicken and the bread, exit east, exit north into the gaol.
19. Collect coin on the table, use key in the keyhole on the west wall, exit north into cell one, exit south, kill monster, exit north into cell two, give man any food you can to provide clues. Exit south.
20. Exit east into cell three, exit west.
21. Exit east into cell four.
22. Return to map point A.
23. Collect the green gem, press button in wall to raise the pit cover in Cadaver store. Read book to discover clues about gems and the pit, exit north into the Cadaver store.
24. Drop rope into hole, walk across hole and fall into the pit.
25. Open the rat to reveal the key for east door, collect other key on the floor and open chest, collect urn, exit east.
26. Exit east into small room, collect green gems (you should now have six), return to the main pit room.
27. Throw all six gems into the large pool, this should teleport you. If you have not got all six gems return to the connecting passage through the east door. Make a stack of stones or other useless objects, and jump up to reach the chain hanging from the ceiling.
28. If you threw all six gems then you will have been teleported to map point B (this is a bit confusing as when you leave via door E you will be moved to map point F). Either means of leaving the pit will return you to map point F. Exit east into the embalming room.
29. Search the skeleton, collect the key, touching the corpse will disturb a monster, exit north into the balm store.
30. There are several potions on a stone ledge: Cure poison (unknown), Shot shield, Stamina (red cross), Poison (acrid). Consume and collect any of these



you want. The key on the floor is for the keyhole in the west wall. It reveals three spiders but is not necessary. Return to the embalming room and exit east into the purificatory.

31. Collect learn potion spell and giant jump potion (frogskin), return to the embalming room.

32. The offal store (south) contains nothing of great value.

33. Return to the corridor with the row of buttons (west, west, west, west).

34. From here exit south, kill the hopping brain with stones. Insert the key (from the skeleton) in the keyhole and exit south.

35. Exit west, exit west in to the mourning room, kill the hopping brain, collect then holy water flasks, collect the charm exit south.

36. Kill the brain, collect the key left by the dead brain, exit west, do not collect the holy water flasks, collect the charm, exit south.

37. Exit north into the Royal Armoury, collect the bronze armour, sword, red striped shield and bronze helmet (king's personal armour), exit south, exit west into the ante-room.

38. Press the button on the wall (doesn't work without the armour), this will transport you to the king's secret treasury, collect the crown, coins and charm and when finished pull the lever.

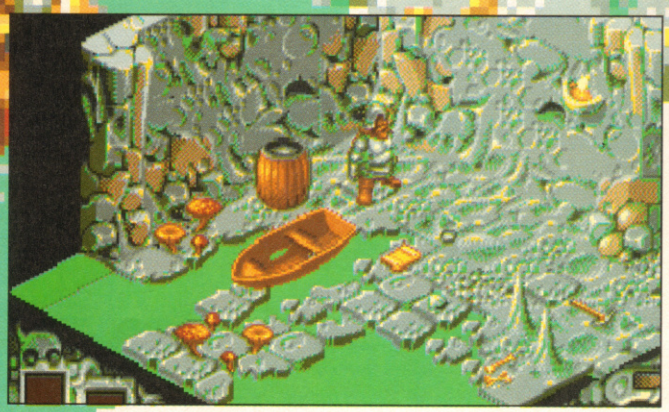
39. You will now be back in the ante-room. Exit south, open the chest, (key from brain), collect the joint of meat and the coin.

40. Return to the mourning room and exit east into the passage, exit east, exit south. You will now find yourself in the first room of the chapel. Two bugs will be wandering around, these bite if you touch them and they spit shots. Kill/avoid the bugs, put out the flames in the bowls by jumping on them, this unlocks the east door. Exit east into the "Way of death"

41. Exit east, exit east into the common crypt. Collect the key on the altar, revealed when the urn smashes, push the four stones off the altar to reveal a cure potion, collect the potion, push the two remaining urns off the slab to reveal a dispel trap spell and a canister of experience. Open it, exit east into the shrine.

42. Collect the money and the other bag of stones, return to common crypt.

43. Exit south into the Glutton's shrine. Throw/drop the joint of meat onto the shrine to be rewarded with a super fast potion. Collect the potion, return to common crypt, exit west into the passage.



44. Exit north into the lesser crypt. Under the heap of stones is a runic stone, exit south and exit north again to enter the priest's crypt. Search the large urn to reveal a charm and a worm, collect the charm, exit south, exit south into the warrior's crypt.

45. Drop gold funerary coin onto the tomb of Kazah. Collect potion (fire shield, save this for the dragon), exit north.

46. Exit west, exit south, collect key, exit north, exit north in to the Lord's crypt, exit north, cast a dispel trap spell on the chest, open chest, collect charm, collect urn.

47. Return to the first room of the chapel, exit south into the next part of the chapel, kill/avoid the bug. Drop the urn of Lord Carolus onto the altar of Lord Carolus, collect the massacre spell (unusable until this is known, save it for the dragon). Exit south into the inner sanctum.

48. From the inner sanctum, exit west into the crematorium, place the urn of Ragnar the chief alchemist onto the appropriate slab. Collect flask of blood, return to inner sanctum.

49. Drop the flask of blood on top of the altar. Collect the key and the spell (read magic), use the key in the keyhole in the west wall, exit west.

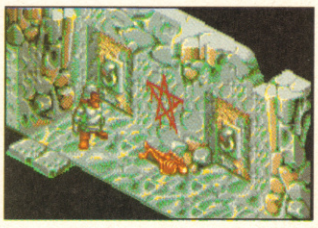
50. Cast dispel trap on to the chest, open the chest and collect the runic stone (read language). Exit north into the library, collect the spell (map), return to the inner sanctum.

51. Drop the unknown spell and cast "read magic" on it. This will allow you to use it to kill the dragon. Exit south, exit west into the purefactory.

52. Drop a flask of holy water into the bowl and drink from the bowl. This will teleport you into a hidden treasure chamber, pull the lever and collect the reward. Repeat this until you run out of holy water.

53. With the massacre spell, the fire shield potion and the king's armour, you are now fully equipped to take on the dragon. Return to the passage with the four buttons in an arrow and press them in the order 1, 4, 3, 2. Exit west, exit north into the Dragon Room.

54. Drink the fire shield potion to protect you from the fireballs, hold the massacre spell and press fire to cast it, the Dragon will blow up. Press the button on the wall, exit north and pull the lever, this will take you on to level 2.



Just look at hint 14 and all will become clear.

'Ere what's going on? Where's all me tips gone. Some bugger's nicked the ruddy lot. Oh no they haven't, they've been split up. From now on it's 16-bit computers only for me sunshine. To be honest, there's something a bit strange about a games machine without a keyboard...

CONSOLE OWNERS!

If you're a crazy consoler, what are you doing here? I've chucked all them weird "press left button 32 times, then up 15 times" tips into the console pages at the front. So that's back 72 pages, forward 12 pages, left a bit, right a bit...

PROPHECY 1: THE VIKING CHILD

Gavin Harriss (free check-up for that strangely spelled name for starters) sent in these lovingly crafted passwords for some of the levels in Imagitech's latest release. Don't know why you bothered mate, I had 'em all the time anyway.

Level 3: Forest
IMAGITECH
Level 5: Land Bridge
JOJO SRN
Level 7: Labyrinth
GUSTAVUS

E-MOTION

Alain Jarvet of somewhere in deepest France has found that typing in the name of Frank Zappa's kid MOONUNIT does some maaaaad things. Pressing F1 will skip forward one level, F2 will skip ten, F3 will skip back one and F4 will skip back ten. About as useful as a peanut in a jam factory!

FLOOD

Typing in SOAP will let you slip and skip all the levels and saves typing in all those hundreds, well 40, passwords that all the other magazines printed. Doctor Zak has saved the day once again.

CURSE OF RA

Thanks to the stirling efforts of the great tipster Doctor Zak – yes, he's back after last month's award-winning extravaganza – I can now bring you the official passwords to the first ten levels. More will follow next month so stay with us – me and Zak that is, or is that me and me...

Level: Password
00 WOBBLER
01 YIG
02 CTHULHU
03 LOVECRAFT
04 TOMMYKNOCKERS
05 WATCHERS
O6 MIDGARD
07 UNICORN
08 ISIS
09 TOLKIEN
10 KAZGOROTH

BATMAN THE MOVIE

Joe Flood (madeupname) thinks we should know about the fact that if you type in JAMMMM on the title screen you will get infinite lives. Sorry, mate, that's a bit old, you're lucky the game's coming out on the Hollywood Collection compilation otherwise I'd have sent the white men in the black coats to see you.

TURRICAN

Arnold Weebolt (another madeupname I'd say) reckons that if you type BLUES MOBILE on the high score table, you will get a whopping great 99 lives! Whatever possessed him to type that in – barking mad!

INDIANA JONES

In the brilliant, addictive, superbly playable, gameplay-packed (careful Zak, don't go over the top) arcade version of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, Andrew Eldritch of Hamburg has typed in his name as SILLYMAN and received a devilishly useful continue option. Less said about that wacky German the better.

X-OUT

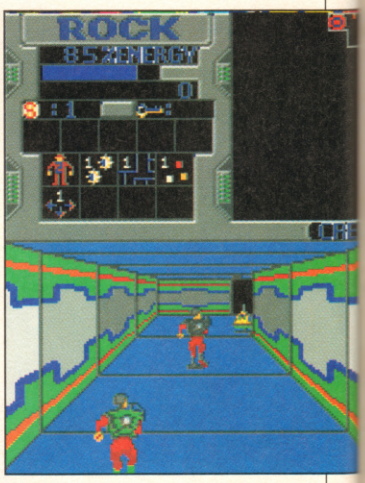
My fellow tipsters, Bouncy Boardman and Eerie Ellis, inform me that there's a sequel coming out soon for *X-Out* called *Z-Out*. Personally, I'd trust this information about as far as I could throw Boardman. Still, back to the original tip. Choosing the smallest ship and the smallest ammo, if Kirsten Wilson is to be believed (wouldn't trust her either), will give you 500,000 credits.

GLOBULUS

What good it will be to anyone, I don't know. But if someone really is desperate to start at level 16 then Michael Bruton from Liverpool has the password for you: KUPjGBLf. Make sure you correctly enter the upper and lower case letters or you'll be checking in at the local loony bin.

XYBOTS

Entering your name as ALF could get you unlimited energy, but only if you've been a good boy for Santa.



F-29 RETALIATOR

Wayne Hussey (not even a titter about that surname) from Leeds is obviously flying high at the moment. If you enter your name as CIARAN, it will change to OCEAN OK, and you will find yourself with an embarrassing amount of weapons. Still, I wouldn't complain.

THE WAITING ROOM

Get given Doctor Zak's tip treatment by sending your 16-bit specials to Doctor Zak's Hacks and Stacks, Raze, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH. Sender of the best tip gets a free check up from the neck up and a fine piece of software for their machine.

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The Commodore A500 Batman Pack must surely rank as one of the most popular computer packs ever! The pack features the **Commodore Amiga 500 computer** with **mouse controller** and **TV modulator**, plus four top software titles. The software includes: **'Batman The Movie'** - Rid Gotham City of the cunning joker, in Ocean's top selling title based on the blockbuster Batman film; **New Zealand Story** - high quality conversion of the leading arcade game; **Interceptor** - Dogfight with two F-16's in this leading flight simulator; **Deluxe Paint II** - top quality Amiga graphics package which set the standard for others to follow. Return the coupon for further details.

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For the more serious or professional applications user, Commodore have a selection of systems based around the expandable Amiga 2000, at prices from £1295+VAT. The A2000 features a full 1Mb RAM (expandable to 9Mb), 9 system expansion slots, plus IBM compatibility with the use of PC-XT or PC-AT bridgeboards. Complete and return the coupon, putting a tick in the A2000 box, for details of A2000 computer systems.

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Here's something completely different - a science fiction story with comic book style graphics. Our heroes Jake and Duke are on the Planet X rescuing Humans who have been captured by the Robot Monsters and forced to create an evil Robot Army to DESTROY EARTH! Jake and Duke fight their way through hordes of evil Robots to help the Humans escape.

RAINBOW ISLANDS:

Slip on your magic shoes, practise throwing a rainbow and you're ready to go island hopping. From the Island of Doh to Monster Island, you will encounter Doh himself, stinging insects, lethal combat machines, mechanical assailants, the formidable beings of legend and folklore. Finally enter the world of darkness and its inhabitants.

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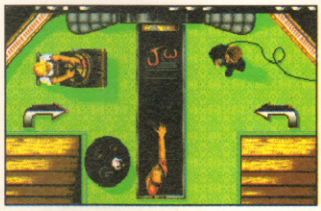
BUDGET BLITZ

Derek da Mizer takes a well-earned break, so this month give a warm welcome to a professional, Sir Ivor Tightwallet, treasurer minister for the Razing Maniacs party. Sir Ivor will be taking you through the cheapies whilst letting slip a few of his own hints for saving money

JOCKY WILSON'S DART CHALLENGE

ZEPPELIN PLATINUM ■ SPORTS SIM



More budget sports this month, but coming in a totally original form from Zeppelin on their 16-bit Platinum label. You can't fail to have seen Jocky "corpulent" Wilson's darts antics. In fact the guy should take up politics, he'd give Cyril Smith a run for his money (not that either of them could run particularly fast).

Darts Challenge is probably the most accurate translation of the pub game you'll get. It captures almost every aspect of the game, even down to having a drunken hand, swaying around trying to aim at the board. Even the main character, presumably a relation of the portly Jocky, comes complete with a beer gut.

There are three individual games in the package: two-player head-to-head challenge; Round the Clock, hitting one to 20 within a time limit; and Tournament, which lets you compete in competition against some of the most strangely named players (eg: 'Ardnut and Dr Death!).

Simple fun, best played with a few pints down yer neck.

Jocky Wilson's Darts Chall-enge. Suck in your stomach, the beer gut starts here.

A darts game may not be your idea of fun but don't be put off. The graphics and sound are impressive and the game is damned addictive, especially the two-player mode.

£9.99 ▼ OUT NOW
AMIGA
80%

Exactly the same as the Amiga version, and one of the most addictively simple games out this month. Why not make a contribution to Jocky's beer money.

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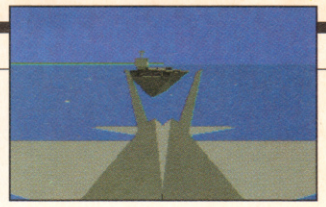
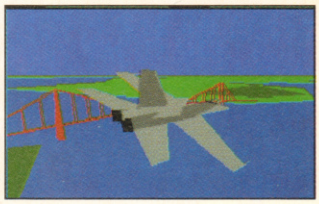
ATARI ST
80%





Pass the leather jacket and Ray-Bans, hit the burners and go for it. Time to buzz the bridge...Ulp looks a tight squeeze..

F/A-18 INTERCEPTOR

ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ FLIGHT SIMULATOR

I think I'd better get a Government Committee to look into these Electronic Arts people. By all accounts they seem to have got their hands on one of the best flight simulations around and managed to release it for just a tenner. How can this be? The voters have a right to know.

The action either starts from an airport inland or an aircraft carrier set in the middle of the ocean. Taking off from the carrier is pure Top Gun, you can even view the plane from eight points, in and out of the plane.

Missions range from an EDO (Emergency Defence Operation), where you must ensure the safe passage of the President's Airforce One jet to your own airport, to rescuing downed pilots from enemy hands. During the former, the jet is attacked by MiGs which must be intercepted and taken out. This is the general run for most of the missions and makes for compelling gameplay.

Unlike most flight sims, you don't find yourself zooming all over the sky completely out of control. Both jets are loaded up with a fine array of weapons, ensuring addiction for both arcade and flight sim fans alike.

If you want to know how our boys down in the Gulf feel, get a copy of EA's *Interceptor* right now.

It's lost nothing with age and is still one of the best flight sims around. The superb graphics have yet to be matched by some present day simulators. Sound, too, surpasses most other flight sims.

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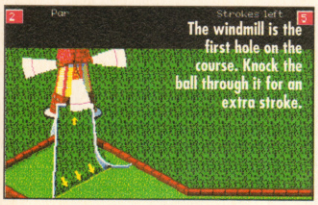
AMIGA
90%



ZANY GOLF

ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ COMIC SPORTS

Remember those great days at the seaside, playing crazy golf on one of those council-run courses? Ah, before privatization, those were the days. But those days are here again, but in the comfort of your own home – will it ever be the same?

In another release of an old classic, EA have captured the feel and fun of the seaside/fair courses. Up to four players can compete over nine holes, each one individually designed around a certain theme. For example, you'll encounter a windmill, a giant hamburger, a magic carpet and even the obligatory castle.

Spare strokes (under par) are added to the par of the next hole, thus increasing its ease of completion. Therefore, you must always par the first hole, with later holes becoming easier the better you are. The amount of strokes left at the end of the nine holes is calculated as your bonus.

There are both power and accuracy controls, with each hole having its own special characteristics – gradient, doors, wind, etc – to test the mastery of these controls.

Each hole has its own wacky tune and superbly animated sprites. An ideal stocking filler this Christmas.

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ATARI ST

75%

The cartoon graphics really bring *Zany Golf* to life. Along with the odd spot effects and typically zany music, this sure is a weird bundle of fun.

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AMIGA

75%

PLATINUM

CAPCOM/US GOLD ■ COMPILATION

US Gold must have a crateful of great software up their sleeve. With the numerous Capcom licences around, it was only a matter of time before they released a few games on compilation. *Platinum* is pure Capcom magic, and really good value. It contains four of the best US Gold/Capcom releases from the past year. They are *Forgotten Worlds*, *Strider*, *Black Tiger* and *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*.

Forgotten Worlds received rave reviews last year, but a year later most software has caught up with its startling presentation and cool graphics. The one- or two-player action is based over a horizontal shoot-'em-up area split into four scrolling levels. All sizes and waves of alien forms spin through the sky towards you. The action is frenetic but repetitive.

Strider was designed a few years ago and has a storyline to prove it. The main objective is to infiltrate the Russian Red Army – quite ironic with Gorbochev receiving the Nobel Peace Prize this year! *Strider* was one of the first Capcom games to use their new superchip technology, and it certainly shows.

The action takes place over slopes, platforms and ladders. The eponymous main character literally "strides" along the play area jumping, spinning and sprinting from one platform to the next. The graphics are superb, with some super-smooth (although not too quick) animation. Sound, too, utilises the Amiga's sound chip to the full. Some great tunes pound out of the speakers, while the effects bring the whole game to life. One of the better games of the four. *Black Tiger* has the dubious honour of being one of the most delayed computer games ever. Around two years after it was originally planned, *Black Tiger* eventually made it onto the streets. The game is typical Capcom. A medieval romp across the countryside slaying dragons and rescuing maidens. Even up against the present games of this genre, *Black Tiger* still holds its own. It failed to receive the accolades of the other games in the quartet, but has probably stood the test of time best.

Finally, there's the ever-popular *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, follow-up to the legendary *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*. There's a full review of the Mega Drive version of page 60, and the Amiga has few gameplay differences. However, due to the enhanced abilities of cartridged-based software, you don't get parallax scrolling on the 16-bit computer versions and the levels are also somewhat smaller. Still, this doesn't detract from the game being one of the best arcade romps Capcom have ever come up with. Worthy of every computer owner's attention.

A great anthology of some of Capcom's best games, using all the extra abilities of the Amiga.

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ATARI ST

77%

Keeps the playability of all the classic coin-ops.

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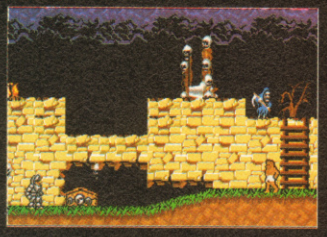
AMIGA

77%

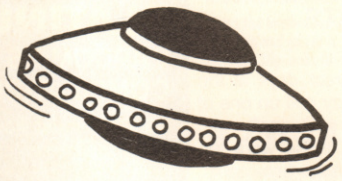
A typically lazy Capcom sprite just hangs around the screen waiting for another Commi.



Arthur braves all; mad scythe-swinging skeletons are the very least of his worries.

Barbecued hero here as this iron clad nasty takes up a burning issue.

Nothing on Earth Compares



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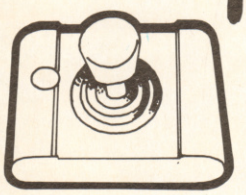

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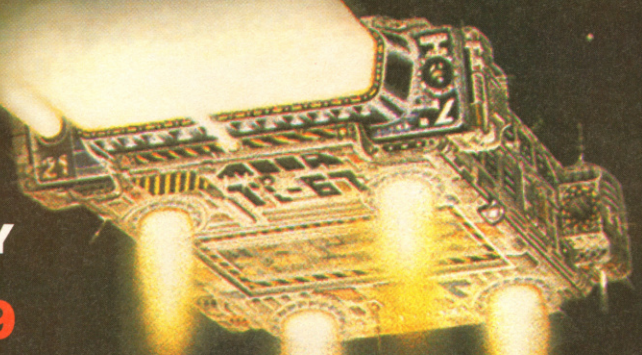

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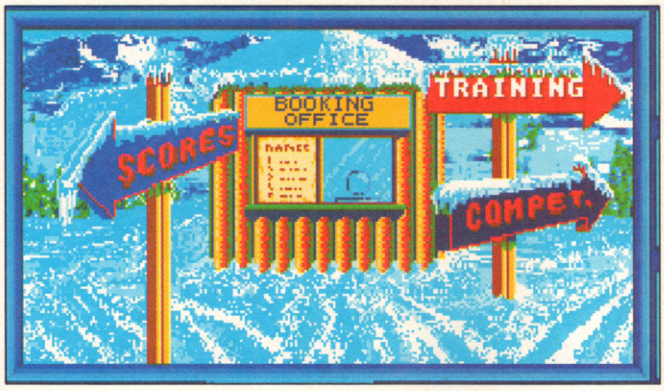
SUPERSKI CHALLENGE

SMASH 16 ■ SPORTS SIM



Superski Challenge is probably the most seasonal of the latest budget games – well, it's got some snow in it.

Up to five players can take part in the three events: slalom, ski jumping and downhill.

The action is viewed from behind the skier, who crouches and stretches in tandem with the bumping slopes. Both downhill races require a good deal of anticipation, if not for the poles then for the sharp corners. The ski jumping, too, requires a good deal of accuracy to makes sure you don't wipe out in a snowy ball.

Considering the ludicrously low price – just £4.99! – the amount of content is impressive.

The graphics are superb for a skiing game. What you get are real meaty racers who are animated as if they are actually skiing, not just bending forward. Sound is splattered with a few good effects.

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AMIGA

70%

You get a real feeling of speed as the trees whizz by and the slalom poles knock your elbows. Effects are liberal, but sound pretty tinny through the ST speaker. Graphics, though, are Amiga quality.

£4.99▼ OUT NOW

ATARI ST

70%

With skiing games, you don't exactly need a 13 million colour palette, just a lot of white. Therefore, the game comes off on all configurations, with a few beepy effects. And, let's face it, you can't ask for more at £4.99.

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BLINKY'S SCARY SCHOOL

ZEPPELIN ■ PLATFORM GAME

Being a ghost is never easy. Some would say that haunting people is a doddle, but due to recent Government reforms by my Right Honourable friend Hamish Spectre, Minister for Hauntings, ghosts now have to attend a special School of Possession. Blinky is the latest star pupil from the Scary School, as it has been dubbed by the students, to be given the hallowed status of a job at Drumtrochie castle, the toughest assignment a ghost could get.

You must enter the castle, explore the maze of rooms, and eventually find the lord of the manor and wake him up, which will hopefully kill him with fright. There are untold dangers lying about the castle, installed many years ago by that old rascal Red Laird McTavish. Certain rooms around the place contain ingredients to make spells which you can conjure up and use against the evil inhabitants of the castle.

The sound and graphics are identical to the Amiga version, and subsequently very good. But unfortunately the gameplay is just not up to scratch, even for ten quid.

£9.95▼ OUT NOW

ATARI ST

60%

Some lovely, vivid graphics, reminiscent of Code Masters' *Dizzy* series. The screen is full of super little characters, all cutely animated. It's a pity the gameplay is very shallow, requiring little strategy.

£9.95▼ OUT NOW

AMIGA

60%

BUDGET BITZ

★ Electronic Arts have really hit the budget scene with a storm. In total they're rereleasing 13 games in their £9.99 Star Performer range. The pick of the bunch are *Interceptor* and *Zany Golf* (reviewed this month), *The Bard's Tale II* (Amiga, IBM PC), *Ferrari Formula One* (Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC), *Keef the Thief* (Amiga, IBM PC), *Swords of Twilight* (Amiga), *Hound of the Shadow* (Amiga, Atari ST) and the fun utility *Instant Music* (Amiga). They're the idea present to give or receive this Christmas, so make sure you look out for them. They all come in the original packaging and therefore represent amazing value for money. Now, if that lot don't cure your budget deficit, nothing will.

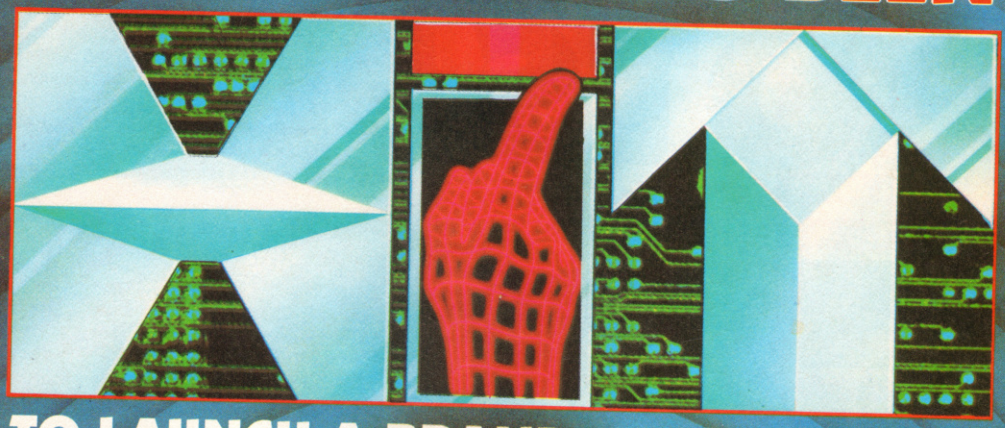
★ Interceptor have also released a batch of sizzling software at a price that's just right. They have *Operation Neptune* (Atari ST) in which you play the role of an aquatic James Bond (Pond?) and must destroy underwater bases; *Iron Tracker* (Amiga, Atari ST), set in a post nuclear war world where you race Quad bikes *Pitstop II*-style from city to city killing all in your way; and *Dizzy Dice* (IBM PC), the monthly budget fruit machine simulator.

★ Winging its way towards you soon from Electronic Zoo will be an updated version of *Tracksuit Manager* (Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC), the classic 8-bit football management game.

★ Reeling towards you this month also from Code Masters is *Advanced Fruit Machine* on the Amiga and Atari ST at £6.99. The game utilises all the features of a modern fruit machine like hold and nudges and also has the extra money earning bonus games. Ulike the real thing, this game won't keep swallowing your money.

★ Compilation specialists Domark are back with a vengeance this month with the imminent release of *Wheels of Fire*, featuring the games *Hard Drivin'*, *Chase HQ*, *Turbo Outrun* and *Power Drift*. Full reviews will follow next month. *Wheels of Fire* will be out on Amiga and Atari ST for £29.99.

THE BUTTON HAS BEEN



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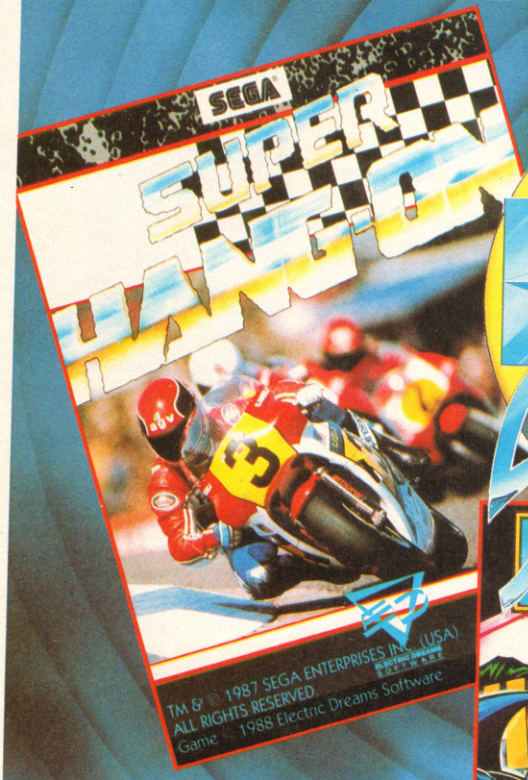

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HOT SLOTS

They're warmer than a Bangkok night. They're sweatier than Bo Derek's underwear. They're steamier than a night at the Turkish baths. It's Suzy Uki's Hot Slots!

Welcome back, English people, to another sizzling session with my hot slots – and they're even hotter this month! During my travels I've been lucky enough to try my experienced hand on some of the latest games the arcade industry has to offer. They're big, they're mean – in fact, they're just the kind of thing a girl like me enjoys. Indeed, with all that throbbing hardware around, a girl can often find herself doing things that mother wouldn't approve of. But enough of my seedy social life, let's plunge into my hot slots. And don't forget, they'll be winging their way to an arcade near you real soon!

THE ULTIMATE IN RACING REALISM?

If arcade racing games just don't conjure up enough realism, then jump on the first flight over to Japan and check out Sega's new *Super Circuit*. Housed in a huge arcade complex, the *Super Circuit* combines a traditional Japanese pastime with the latest arcade technology.

Up to five players can race against each other around a track that would give even Nakajima (English readers read Mansell or Prost) nightmares. Nothing special so far, but what makes *Super Circuit* so special is that there's not a single computer pixel in sight – each player controls a real radio-controlled car with a colour video camera mounted on it. As the cars race around the track, the player gets a real driver's eye view of the action transmitted to their sit-down arcade booth from each car's onboard camera. The booths feature all the usual controls including a steering wheel, brake and accelerator pedals, and even a real speedometer.

The overall effect is breathtaking – and those cars really do shift! Considering the limited size of the track, the cars jet around the corners at deathly speeds. On the straights, they can often reach speeds exceeding 30 mph! Perhaps someone would like to come up with a similar track in Britain?

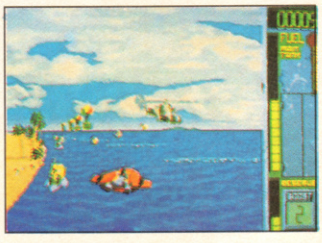
HYDRA

Atari Games

The IRA are a bunch of softies compared to the kind of terrorists that live in the far future. They're a mean bunch who would rather massacre a bus full of nuns than give you the time of day. Indeed, there's nothing they like better than wreaking terror and destruction on the peoples of the world for no apparent reason. Causes? Who needs a cause? They don't fight for liberation or anything namby-pamby like that – they just enjoy spilling blood!

Terrorism has risen to such a critical level that the terrorists now rule the skies and seas. Nowhere is safe from their callous acts. Even the governments of the world are powerless to stop their reign of terror. When a government needs a top secret package delivered – like mutant virus strains and doomsday devices – they call upon the services of a very special courier indeed. And that courier is you – codename HYDRA.

Hey! Yeah! Don those shades and get on down to California.



Whatever happens, the parcel must get there on time. No-one can stop Hydra

In your trusty supercharged Hydracraft, you must skilfully drive through nine terrorist-infested missions in which you'll encounter enemy forces in crafts as diverse as jet fighters, zeppelins and hovercraft. For most of the action, your hovercraft skims along the surface of the water, but you can also take on airborne targets by hitting a boost button which sends you soaring into the sky.

Hydra certainly isn't original, but neither's a bonk and you can still have fun. The gameplay and perspective are almost identical to games such as *Operation Thunderbolt* – but when the action's as good as this, who cares? *Hydra* features the usual standard of Atari graphics and animations, all set against digitised backdrops. The action is certainly fast paced – the attacking terrorists fly towards you at break-neck speeds, pushing your reactions to their limits. Can you handle the pace?

SUZI UKI'S HOTTEST SLOTS

1 **SMASH TV** (Williams)
2 **MAGIC SWORD** (Capcom)
3 **PUNK SHOT** (Konami)
4 **LIGHTNING FIGHTERS** (Konami)
5 **PASSING SHOT** (Sega)
6 **COLUMNS** (Sega)
7 **MOONWALKER** (Sega)
8 **BONANZA BROS** (Sega)
9 **MUSTANG** (UPL)
10 **OUT ZONE** (Toaplan)

GP RIDER

Sega

Sega set the standard by which all motorcycle racing games are measured with the classic *Super Hang-On,* but now there's a new machine to get your leg over. For the ride of your life try Sega's latest, *GP Rider*.

The throbbing beast offers the ultimate in motorcycling realism. *Super Hang-On* grew tiresome after a while, but *GP Rider* adds a new element to the genre with its two-player racing mode. Just like games such as *Fourtrax and Final Lap, up to two players can race against each other around a series of increasingly torturous tracks.*

The speed, size and complexity GP Rider's graphics have got to be seen to be believed. The main character's a real hunk. His rippling muscles and bulging thighs are enough to make a girl go weak at the knees. Graphics of your "rider" are huge and highly detailed, but you're not alone on the tracks – other riders scream past you at such a speed that, more often than not, they're gone before you get a chance to react.

Watch those corners, though – the trick is to fully brake as you approach the corner and then power through at high speed. This way, you can achieve maximum acceleration, allowing the old nitro burners to kick in to give you an extra spurt of speed.

GP Rider is available in both upright and leg-over format. The ride-on cabinet features two moulded bikes complete with handle bars that you can ride just like the real thing. As you approach the corners, your bike realistically leans to take the bend. If you get a chance to get your leg over, take it, it's worth the experience.

Keep your speed up, your head down, and your bottom tucked in – this girl's gonna give you the ride of your life.

TROG

Bally/Midway

Wildlife conservation has always been a problem – modern day scientists may blame it on over zealous farmers, greedy business, global warming and acid rain, but the very existence of certain animals has been under constant threat since time began. Back in prehistoric times, our ancestors single-handedly caused the extinction of those mighty beasts, the dinosaurs. Okay, the history books claim that man didn't actually exist until a few million years after the last dinosaur kicked the bucket, but irrelevant technicalities such as this can be ignored occasionally.

Trog is a fine example of a prehistoric man. He's got an appetite like a starved elephant, and there's nothing he likes better than a bit of succulent dinosaur on his platter (sounds like my sort of guy!). Trog a simple sort of chap with little more than a couple of brain cells to rub together, so such issues as wildlife conservation just don't mean anything to him. As long as his stomach is kept full, and his bed kept warm, then he's happy.

It's up to you to save the Dinos before Trog eat them all till they become extinct. Working either individually or as a team with up to four players, the goal is to collect your Dino eggs and lead your Dino safely home. Players can direct not only their own Dinos, but can also have a hand in leading the other player's Dinos the right way, the wrong way and perhaps even into the jaws of old Trog himself (naughty, naughty!).

Saving the Dinos becomes increasing difficult with each screen. Suddenly there are blazing fires to avoid (Dinos hate fire!), mushrooms that slow the Dinos down (magic mushrooms, perhaps?) and plantlife that sends them zipping in all directions (I'll have some of that!).

Trog is really nothing more than an adaptation of the classic *Pac-Man* formula, but the cutesy cartoon graphics and great sound make this a refreshing change from the usual. As the saying goes, the old ones can often be the best – and they're definitely more experienced!

BONANZA BROS

Sega

Crooks aren't as easy to spot as they used to be. Back in the days of our grandparents, crooks were considerate enough to wear striped shirts and carry a large bag with the word "SWAG" on the front. These days, they're somewhat less conspicuous.

Thankfully, you wouldn't have much problem spotting Mobo and Robo (aka the Bonanza Bros), the two comical stars of Sega's latest game based around their powerful System 24 mother board. System 24 excels in horizontal resolution, beautiful graphics and crisp sound. The combination of high resolution graphics and a vast palette of colours makes *Bonanza Bros* one of the prettiest machines around – everything is so realistically shaded that the whole game has a certain homely feel to it.

The Bonanza Bros are high-tech burglars specialising in high class thefts. You won't catch Mobo and Robo nicking cash from a church collection box – that's far too common for them! No, Robo and Mobo like to concentrate their efforts on locations that offer a much higher turnover – banks, millionaire's mansions and art museums to be precise.

Two players can play simultaneously, taking on the roles of Mobo and Robo. The idea is to plunder the three levels, collecting as much booty as possible, whilst avoiding the security patrol robots. You haven't got long though, time is against you. If you fail to clear the building before time runs out, the local robot fuzz will be onto you.

Bonanza Bros is a fun game that will appeal to all. It's loaded with comical humour and some great gameplay. If you're bored with the endless stream of shoot-'em-ups, then pay the Bonanza Bros a call on your next trip to the gay-cen.

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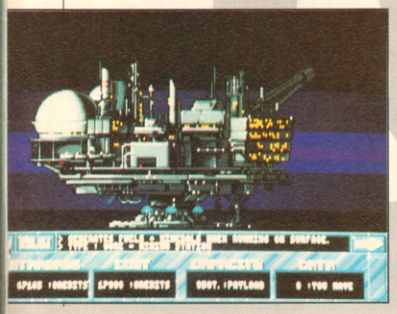
RAZE JAN

NEURO venture

<Clatter> <Clatter> <Bing Bong> Holospace Service Announcement: Paul Rigby arriving at Bow Door 4. Would all passengers requiring news and reviews of the latest adventure, strategy and roleplaying games please make their way to Space Terminal 4 on Matter Transporters 254 and 255. Thank you

● It appears that Sir-Tech's *Wizardry* series is at an end as they announce details of a "new Wizardry system". A SF theme called *Bane of the Cosmic Forge*, the system promises 11 races, 14 professions, NPCs, multiple fight modes, hundreds of creatures and items, six spell realms, six power levels and a full-colour 3-D world (now there's a novelty for Sir-Tech!).



Supremacy is a true strategy game combining superb graphics and sound with some engrossing gameplay.

SUPREMACY

VIRGIN/MASTERTRONIC ■ STRATEGY

You play the leader of Epsilon in this fight for stellar domination. Your system is linked to four other star systems, an alien planet lies at the end of each. You have four different opponents – Wotok, Smine, Krart and Rorn – who have increasing amounts of intelligence, aggression, etc. Not surprisingly, you must defeat each alien race in turn to become supreme ruler.

However, initially you must get your own planet in order. You must raise the population, juggle taxes, monitor morale, initiate food, mineral, fuel and energy production, and begin building and training your armed forces.

A variety of spaceships will aid the cause. Divided up into Cargo Cruisers, Solar Satellite Generators, Battle Cruisers, Atmosphere Processors (this God-like mechanism "formats" a lifeless planet for human habitation), Mining Stations and Horticultural Stations (for food).

Building armed forces asks you to select the amount of men allocated in one platoon to be taken from the planet's civilian population (you then add armour and weapons of varying quality). A deficiency of any essential resources (food, energy, etc) results in the lowering of the population due to hardship. Also, disasters can occur. For example, the testing of a new formatting process went wrong on one planet resulting in a mass slaughter of the planetary population due to nuclear fallout.

Thus, you will find yourself juggling an increasing amount of planets, a larger amount of varying factors and, therefore, an increasing numbers of problems. The more successful you become, the harder the game becomes.

Combat is largely an automatic affair, you just sit and watch the events roll in front of you. The enemy is a devious and cunning opponent. Sometimes hitting your home base, venturing behind enemy lines, concentrating on your weaker forces, etc.

Supremacy is very easy to get into and play. It is recommended for beginner and experienced strategists alike. The presentation is glossy and entertaining. The challenge is high, and tactical thought is necessary. If you're after a strategy game that doesn't demand too much pre-game study with a long learning curve, *Supremacy* is the game for you.

Graphics are excellent with lots of spot animation and sound effects that add to the atmosphere. The manual is helpful and the interface is easy to use, utilising icons.

£24.95

AMIGA

87%

A helpful manual and easy to use menus soon get you into the cut and thrust of the game.

THE IMMORTAL

ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ ADVENTURE

The Immortal is a tale of swords and sorcery. You play a wizard out to save your old master who's trapped at the bottom of a multi-floored labyrinth. Your wizard moves in eight directions with combat following an arcade style.

Pressing the space bar brings up your inventory, which could include spells, gold, etc. Click on the spell scroll and you'll send out a fireball which can bounce off walls. Doing the same with any other object either prepares, uses or drops it. The design of the inventory is neat, efficient and speedy.

The plot is intriguing. You think you've got the game sussed only to find it spring another surprise upon you. The manual is very helpful giving hints and tips to get you into the thrust of the game.

All in all, *The Immortal* is a classy product. The only problem I encountered was with the combat section. When the wizard character changed his orientation/direction the action commands tended to change orientation with him. Of course, with practice you should come to grips with this but I felt the confusion unnecessary.

The Immortal can be heartily recommended, probably more so to adventurers (for its puzzle content) than to arcadesters who may find the game too "slow" for their liking.

Sound effects are atmospheric but few, the graphics are detailed and the animation is delightfully realistic. Puzzles are varied, non-linear and, on occasion, real-time with a time limit. 1Mb machines only.

£24.99

AMIGA

82%

Similar to the Amiga, with super graphics and challenging puzzles.

£24.99

ATARI ST

82%

Legend of Faerghail is a surprise hit for Reline, previously renowned for *Hollywood Poker Pro.*

LEGEND OF FAERGHAIL

RAINBOW ARTS/RELINE ■ INTERACTIVE RPG

Arriving on three disks, complete with a manual that includes 95 English pages, the plot of *Legend of Faerghail* sets you as the warrior to free the elves who are suffering from the forces of evil. It appears that the normally peaceful elves have become unnaturally violent so you must find out what's happened.

The game world has a first-person perspective. There are eight dungeon sectors, each with at least four levels (each level containing over 1200 rooms).

Character creation is thoughtful in that female characters are recognised as stand-alone figures, have higher wisdom than males and have a higher constitution. Character design is full of common sense. Born intelligence, for example, cannot be changed. Magic is realistic, with you having a daily quota of hit points – reflecting oncoming weariness, no doubt.

One of the best features in the game is the wide range of languages available (there are eight in all) from Animal to Orc. Those proficient in a certain language can obtain information, trade, prevent conflict or encourage a monster to change sides and fight for your party! Training in towns increases language proficiency although training in anything is a hit and miss affair, depending on other factors such as the level of concentration (another nice addition) your character has.

The novel features continue in the dungeons where, if a character fails to pick a lock, another character can break the door with physical force but, and here's the good bit, is liable to injury. Which makes sense. As does the fact that weapons and armour can be damaged in combat – although the blacksmith can repair them. During dungeon combat you can "lure" monsters away from you if you wish to retreat by leaving bait.

Combat introduces a three-line attack. The further forward the character is the more damage it does but the more prone to attack it is too. The rear line is handy for spell-casters to concentrate on offensive/defensive spells. A small overhead view of the combat is seen. Users with expanded machines will see a mini-animated sequence of each individual character skirmish. The good aspect of encounters is that you can back away from all of them. Handy because they appear frequently.

Legend of Faerghail turned out to be a real surprise. Well presented, atmospheric and intelligently designed, *Legend* is a little cracker.

Presentation is excellent. The graphics are good, but it is the way they are implemented, along with the spot effects, that makes the difference. Very atmospheric.

£29.99

AMIGA

90%

SILENT SERVICE II

MICROPROSE ■ STRATEGY SIMULATION

Submarine simulators are probably the only simulation sub-genre to relate the superior feelings of hitting the enemy from the "safe" expanse of the ocean while also conveying the sheer horror and solitude of being hunted down by sonar and depth charged. *Silent Service II*, the sequel to the best known sub sim around, concentrates the mind wonderfully in both of these areas.

With seven sub classes (each with their own performance model), players can undertake patrols or full-scale war campaigns with promotions and medals.

Coming with the keyboard overlays and colour area map is the usual MicroProse tome – 128 pages, in this case. It is an excellent piece of documentation that will teach you all you'll need to know about life below the waves. The manual will impart valuable advice on the deck gun, tips on using the TDC to the best advantage, battle tactics, evading ASW, historical notes on engagements and data on individual vessels.

SS2 also includes all of the usual views and features: multiple views, strategic campaign map, tactical maps, a detailed damage screen, etc.

There is no doubt that *Silent Service 2* is the ultimate submarine simulation on the grounds of visual and aural features and, of course, realism.

The included VGA screens, some of which are animated (including digitised ship graphics), are truly superb. Sadly, memory restrictions rear their ugly head. With VGA, sound boards (all supported) and decent digitised voice command feedback from the PC speaker, it is possible that some of the many ship graphics will be absent from play. You will need 640K, plus the removal of all unnecessary drivers and memory resident programs to appreciate *Silent Service II* fully.

£29.95

IBM PC

92%

The feeling of loneliness in *Silent Service II* cannot be matched.

- The *Megatraveller 1* RPG from Paragon will not, it appears, be distributed by MicroProse. In addition, version three of the game has arrived (the other versions were ridden with design faults).
- Storm Computers, aka Internecine, will introduce a follow-up to their *Blitzkrieg* and *White Death* game system. Called *Suez '73*, it will be similar to *White Death*. The combat AI will be improved and the play will be quicker (thank goodness!).
- The creator of the well-received *Action Stations* is working with Spectrum Holobyte to produce a game on Pearl Harbour (the anniversary is next year).
- Spectrum Holobyte are to introduce *Sphere of Influence* early in January. It's a game of geopolitics, economics and military decisions.

Romance is in the air for Guibrush Threepwood who must rescue the female governor from *Monkey Island.*

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

LUCASFILM/US GOLD ■ ADVENTURE

Monkey Island is another in the series of Lucasfilm animated graphic adventures.

Guibrush Threepwood arrives in the Caribbean to become a pirate. He eventually winds his way into town where he meets three important pirates who run things around the place. They give him three trials to become a pirate.

However, things change in the world around him, shifting his focus from piracy to... romance! Yes, ol' Guibrush falls madly in love with the female governor (mad fool!). After she is forcibly taken away to Monkey Island, our hero sets off after her. However, the story is not a simple rescue-the-fair-maiden plot. The game twists and turns from here on in.

The adventure creation system "Scumm" has been through one or two tweaks since it was last dragged out to create *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. For example, the characters are now scaled proportionally to their background. This enables the game to give a greater sense of depth to the backgrounds. Now the characters walk into the screen, becoming larger and smaller as they travel. The interface and the mouse are also improved. For example, you can now move the cursor over a door and press the right mouse button – the door will then open. Instead of walking over to the door, clicking on the word "open" in the menu, then clicking on the door, and so on. You are also able to initiate conversation just by moving the cursor over a character and clicking.

Dialogue is much more refined. You have a multiple choice for what you can say to the character. Each choice has a different emotional position, in terms of what you want to get out of the conversation.

One other unique aspect of *Monkey Island* is the sword fighting. Where you can throw insults at your foe in mid-fight. The more insults you know the more fights you'll win!

The Secret of Monkey Island is an excellent piece of pure entertainment. The whole atmosphere breathes humour. I found I spent most of the time looking for different characters to chat to as they all provided a giggle or two. The wide range of generally absurd questions on offer in the interaction menu also proved too tempting; I just had to try each one out just to see what response I'd get. It wasn't till after I'd switched off that I remembered that I should have been solving puzzles and actually finishing the thing! *Monkey Island* is, well, fun! No deep, meaningful quests, no save-the-world-or-die-trying just good old-fashioned entertainment. Buy it and you won't be disappointed

Super, detailed and colourful graphics that are an undoubted improvement on previous Lucasfilm games. Sound, too, while not outstanding adds a good deal of atmosphere.

PREVIEW

The Amiga version (£24.95) is a direct conversion of the impressive IBM PC one. You should be able to get your hands on it around Christmas time.

£29.95

IBM PC

93%

BUCK ROGERS VOL.1 COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY

SSI/US GOLD ■ TACTICAL RPG

As Buck Rogers, the main man, you lead a team of rebels within the New Earth Organization (NEO). Your foe? The RAM (Russo-American Mercantile) based on Mars. They want to control the Solar System, your task is to stop them.

Buck Rogers uses an uprated AD&D system and shows many similarities to its forefather. The swords have been replaced by laser guns, the towns and villages by planets and space stations. You still control a group of six, the menu interface is structured in the same way, even the `meanwhile' screens appear to have the same artistic feel to them.

However, improvements there are. Probably the greatest asset to the game is the complex skill system that forms its core. Skills have a direct influence in the game. Leadership skills may attract NPCs into the party during combat sequences, for example.

The attribute table holds but one surprise. Tech measures a character's technical know-how. Character classes, as in the fantasy genre, may only have certain careers. The available careers are interesting and varied. Rocketjocks and engineers mix with rogues and warriors.

Combat is the classic raised-side-view which is ideal for tactical play. Space combat is also available, with nifty options such as boarding and salvage.

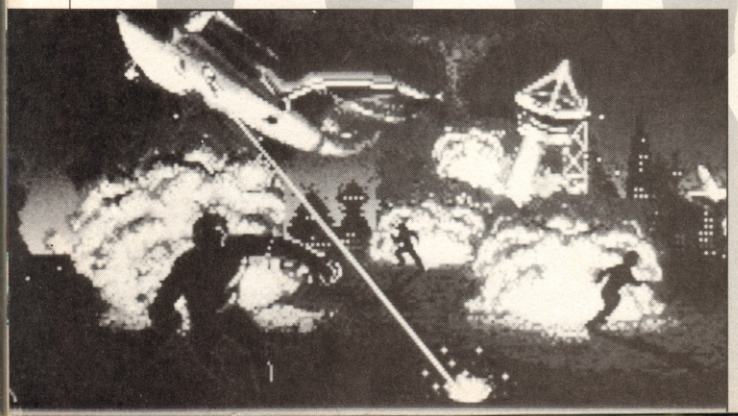
Many of the menu options are similar in their effects to the AD&D system, with modifications such as a bar/restaurant instead of the tavern, for example. There are novel options such as the library to find info (an appropriate skill is required to achieve success). Other notables are jury-rig (used when equipment is damaged), boost engines (attempting to squeeze extra speed out of the engines) and sensor (to probe enemy ships).

The modifications to the AD&D system are most welcome, while the skill system integrates smoothly into the high-tech SF atmosphere giving much more depth to gameplay. You really feel that each of your characters are `individuals' rather than a mere conglomeration of a few airy-fairy stats like charisma and strength.

The combat sequence, as in all SSI's RPGs, is excellent and will be enjoyed by tacticians everywhere. There is a vast amount of detail and variables to each character (both in normal play and during combat) that makes *Buck Rogers* absorbing and addictive. Coming on three disks and two manuals, with good graphics and sound board support, *Volume 1* of the Buck Rogers series has to be the best tactical RPG on the market.

- **Rumours abound that the new MSound PC sound card from Gravis will come with sound support for *Flight Simulator 4* (digitised from the real thing).**
- **Broderbund are to produce *Galleons of Glory*, reliving three of Magellan's voyages. Historical discovery and resource management serve as gameplay.**

The superb tactical options, combined with attractive graphics and comprehensive sound support, make Buck Rogers the RPG to be reckoned with.



***Countdown to Doomsday* is way ahead of the competition. Not only does it contain all the meaty attributes and gameplay of a classic RPG, it also has a strong tactical approach making it engrossing. Buck Rogers has always been a classic space hero and now he has a classic game.**

£29.95

IBM PC

92%

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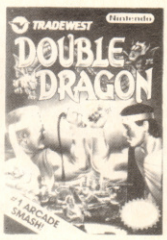

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The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle movie is coming soon, and you could be one of the first to see it if you win our shell shock of a comp!! We've got 100 tickets to give away to a special show later this year, so call now!!!

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IT'S A PIZZA CAKE TO WIN IN OUR TASTY TURTLE COMPS!

Calls cost 33p (cheap rate) and 44p (at all other times) per minute including VAT.
Voiceline, PO Box 1640, London, NW1 8NG. Please ask your parents permission before you call.

RAZE C

A personal message

If entertainment's the name of the game, then you can't miss out on RAZE. Crammed full of console, computer and coin-op entertainment, RAZE guides you through the maze of new high-tech gadgets, sizzling software releases and mega games events.
There's only one way to make sure you don't miss out on Shintaro's culinary delights, Marshall's multi-billion dollar fax messages and Suzi's big pulsating turn-ons and hot slots: Subscribe to RAZE and stop chewing your near extinct finger nails. Stop worrying about whether there's a copy left at your Newsagent, whether your going to survive on crisps and coke alone for the remainder of the month, or whether your going to have to rush off to the British Library to read the latest copy of RAZE on microfiche.

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Subscribe now for twelve issues and settle back in your comfortable hydraulically pulsating cabinet seat and enjoy!

RAZE has it's very own subscription and single issue sales office in Ontario, Canada. Just phone your order through to Barry Hatcher of British Magazine Distributors Ltd. on tel. 519 421 1285 (fax 519 421 1873) - Mastercard Welcome. Alternatively send your enquiries to British Magazine Distributors Ltd., 598 Durham Crescent, Unit 14, Woodstock, Ontario N4S 5X3, Canada. Yearly subscription rates USA $65, Canada CAN $75. Single issues USA $5.45, Canada CAN $6.45 (inclusive postage)

Yes, put me out of my misery and count me in as a subscriber to RAZE. I look forward to twelve action packed issues of RAZE.

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Return this deposition with your dosh in an envelope to:
NEWSFIELD, SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1JW

Answer the RAZE QUESTIONNAIRE and you could win a SUPER FAMICOM

RAZE has been hurtling along for three issues now. So whether you think the content is either stonking or stinking we want to hear your views.

Your opinions are the only ones that count. If you'd love to see something extra covered, or you absolutely hate a section then tick those little boxes below and something might be done about it. Power to the people, that's what it's all about.

Even though some people will quite happily reveal all for their favourite magazine, we know that others need a little kick to get them going. So, every form returned to us will automatically be entered into a free draw to win a 16-bit Super Famicon console! Can't say fairer than that!

YOU

1 Are you: MALE ❑ FEMALE ❑

2 How old are you?.....

3 Are you:
❑ AT SCHOOL
❑ COLLEGE/POLY/UNIVERSITY
❑ WORKING FULL TIME
❑ WORKING PART TIME
❑ UNEMPLOYED
❑ OTHER

4 If you work, what is your occupation?

.....

5 What is your weekly income (net)?
❑ up to £5 ❑ £5-£10
❑ £10-30 ❑ £30-£100
❑ £100-£200 ❑ £200+

6 On average, how many other people read your copy of RAZE?.....

7 How do you get your RAZE?
❑ SUBSCRIPTION
❑ RESERVED AT A NEWSAGENTS
❑ OFF THE SHELF
❑ OTHER

8 What other computer/console magazines do you buy?
a).....
b).....
c).....

9 How would you rate the other magazines (out of ten)?
a).....
b).....
c).....

10 On average, how much do you spend on software every week?
❑ £5-£10 ❑ £10-£30
❑ £30-£60 ❑ £60+

11 What sort of software do you buy the most?
❑ BUDGET/COMPILATIONS ❑ FULL PRICE

12 Where do you usually buy your software from?
❑ SPECIALIST COMPUTER STORE
❑ CHAIN STORE (BOOTS, WH SMITH, etc)
❑ MAIL ORDER

13 What is your major influence in purchasing a game?
❑ RAZE REVIEW
❑ OTHER MAGAZINE REVIEW
❑ ADVERTISING
❑ PROGRAMMERS
❑ SOFTWARE HOUSE
❑ ARCADE/FILM LICENCE

YOUR MACHINE

14 What computer(s)/console(s) do you own?
a).....
b).....
c).....
d).....

15 What is your main computer/console?

.....

16 Are you changing computer(s)/console(s) within six months?
❑ YES
❑ NO

17 If yes, what are you selling and what are you buying?
Selling.....
Buying.....

18 What is your favourite game style? In order of preference from 1, most favourite, to 7, least.
❑ ADVENTURE
❑ ARCADE ADVENTURE
❑ SHOOT-'EM-UP
❑ PUZZLE
❑ SIMULATION (INC. SPORTS)
❑ RPG
❑ STRATEGY

YOUR RAZE

19 Award marks out of ten for the following RAZE pages.

.....FAST FORWARD
.....ENTERTAINMENT USA
.....BIG IN JAPAN
.....MACHINE SPECIFIC COLUMNS
.....REVIEWS
.....IMPORT REVIEWS
.....POSTER
.....HARDWARE REVIEWS
.....HACKS & STACKS
.....BUDGET BLITZ
.....FREE PLAY
.....NEUROVENTURE
.....HOT SLOTS
.....COMPETITIONS
.....RAZE CRAVE (mail order)
.....SUBSCRIPTIONS
.....RAZE THE WORD (letters)

20 If you could give more pages to one section, which would it be?

.....

21 If you could scrap a section what would it be?

.....

22 If you could add a new section what would it be?

.....

23 Should console coverage
❑ INCREASE ❑ DECREASE
❑ STAY THE SAME

24 Should the reviews be
❑ LONGER ❑ SHORTER
❑ STAY THE SAME

25 Should the machine comments be
❑ LONGER ❑ SHORTER
❑ STAY THE SAME

26 What about screen pictures?
❑ MORE
❑ LESS
❑ STAY THE SAME

27 Do you agree with the ratings?
❑ ALWAYS ❑ MOSTLY
❑ SOMETIMES
❑ NEVER

28 Would you pay extra money for a cover-mounted gift?
❑ YES ❑ NO

29 What gift, within reason, would you like to see on the cover?

.....

30 What do you think of the centre page poster?
❑ GREAT
❑ SCRAP IT ❑ DON'T MIND

31 What do you think of the RAZE design?
❑ GREAT ❑ OKAY
❑ RUBBISH

32 What are your three favourite software houses?
a).....
b).....
c).....

33 What are your three least favourite software houses?
a).....
b).....
c).....

OTHER STUFF

34 Which of the following do you like doing?
❑ LISTENING TO MUSIC
FAVE GROUP/SINGER.....
❑ WATCHING TV
FAVE TV PROGRAMME.....
❑ GOING TO THE MOVIES
FAVE RECENT MOVIE.....
❑ PLAYING SPORT
FAVE SPORT.....
❑ READING BOOKS
FAVE RECENT BOOK
❑ READING NON-COMPUTER MAGS
FAVE NON-COMPUTER MAG.....
❑ PERSONAL HOBBY WHICH IS.....
❑ ANYTHING ELSE?

35 What is the maximum price you'd pay for RAZE (excluding any cover gifts)?
❑ £1.95
❑ £2.25
❑ £2.50
❑ £2.95

36 If you had £200 to spend on one thing (non-computer), what would you choose?.....

37 What message would you like to send to the whole games world?

.....

Cut out this page or make a photocopy and send it to: NEWSFIELD, RAZE QUESTIONNAIRE, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1JW. **Get those forms in by December 30. If you wish to be entered into the free draw to win a 16-bit Super Famicon console, fill in your name and address below. All entries will be treated in the strictest confidence.**

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....**Postcode**.....

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Your Personal Voucher Card, stuck to the front of issue one, is your passport to not only scrumptious video recorders, but also equally scrumptious competition prizes and special offers that'll appear in the next few issues of RAZE. Just quote your PVC number in the return coupon and you're in with a chance. What's more, look at the RAZE CRAVE pages for very special price-tumbling discount on consoles and games. Your PVC is the key to total games action.

If you missed issue one, it's still available from: **RAZE Back Numbers, Newsfield, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW, ☎ (0584) 875851.**

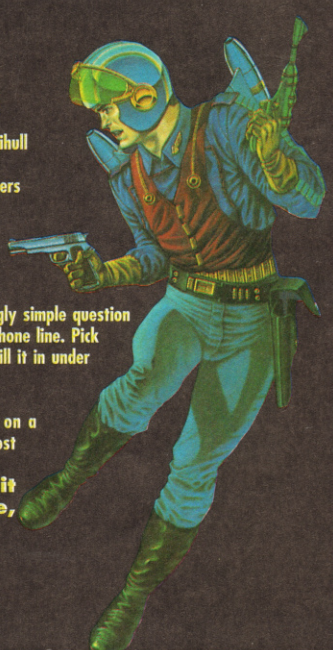
QUESTIONS:

1. Where are US Gold based?
   - A The outer arm of the Spiral Galaxy
   - B Birmingham
   - C Above the Chi-Wong chip shop, Solihull

2. What is the roleplaying system in Buck Rogers computer game based on?
   - A Buck Rogers XXVc
   - B Buck Rogers Three and a bit
   - C Buck Rogers VVXa

3. Dial 0898 555080 and listen to the amazingly simple question that some nice young man will read over the phone line. Pick out what you think is the correct answer and fill it in under question three in the coupon.

All done? Right, cut out the coupon, stick it on a postcard/sealed envelope, and zip it in the post to:
RAZE, Buck Rogers Comp, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH.



WIN A VIDEO RECORDER AND BUCK ROGERS VIDEOS!

From the vacuum of space to cosy, warm, cuddly RAZE comes US Gold's Buck Rogers.
Here's your chance to not only play the game – RAZE Raved in this very issue – but also to wear the T-shirt and watch the video. What d'ya mean you haven't got a video? No problem, if you're a first out of the bag we'll throw in a video recorder too.
All you have to do is answer three piffling questions and the winner will receive a brand spanking new video recorder, a terrific little video featuring Buck, Wilma, Tweeky and all they old favourites (as vetted by the RAZE ravers) and (gasp!) a T-shirt (as worn by Les – er, well, not the exact one of course, that's a bit smelly).
If don't manage to get first out of the bag do not fret, for those generous US Gold gurus will bestow the Buck Rogers video cassette and T-shirt upon ten runners-up. Not bad, eh?

BUCK ROGERS COMPETITION

Hey, you call that a comp, it was more like a giveaway! Here are the answers; make sure I'm first out of the bag, chum!

1 A ☐ B ☐ C ☐

2 A ☐ B ☐ C ☐

3 A ☐ B ☐ C ☐

My **PVC** number is:...

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

All entries must reach us by December 31st. Anything received after that date will be soaked in petrol and burnt then sprinkled into Julian's daily pint of milk.

Clive Barker's THE NIGHTBREED

CABAL

THE ACTION GAME

THE NIGHTMARE

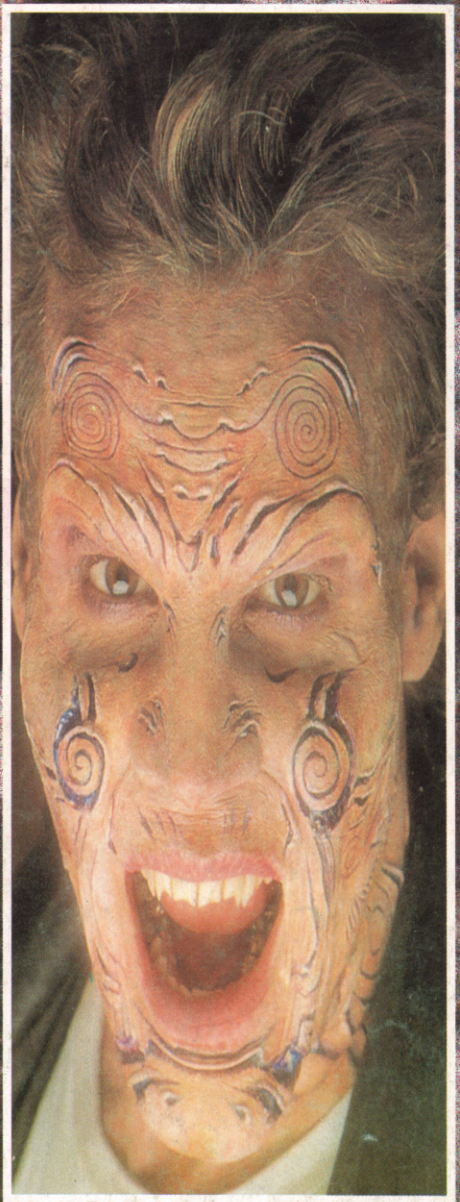
TAKE CONTROL OF BOONE AS HE MAKES HIS WAY THROUGH THE DEPTHS AND CAVERNS OF NECROPOLIS TO

HAS

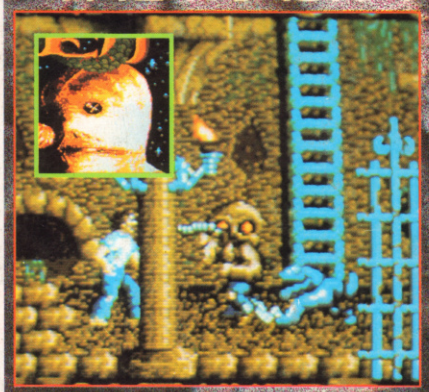
THE UNDERGROUND CITY OF MIDIAN WHERE DWELL THE NIGHTBREED. SUPERNATURAL CREATURES WHO HAVE SHIELDED THEMSELVES FROM

THE INHUMANITIES OF MAN.

NOT ONLY MUST YOU CONFRONT AND DEFEAT THESE CREATURES BUT



YOU MUST PIT YOURSELF AGAINST THE MURDEROUS REDNECK GANG FROM THE NEARBY ABOVE-GROUND CITY AND ULTIMATELY DEFEAT THE INSANE SERIAL KILLER KNOWN AS "THE MASK".



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